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April 1971

THE SOVIET MODEL: FORCED LABOR CAMPS AND OTHER PRISONS

THE ROLE OF LEGISLATION

Regulations on corrective labor adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR over the past decade have been designed more to expand the forced labor colonies than eliminate them; the most recent regulations are essentially new legal instruments designed to facilitate arrests on a grander scale. And the newest corrective labor legislation which is due to come into force in all the Soviet republics as of 1 June 1971 is no different. Most important, the new legislation fails to abrogate any of the very broad "antiparasite" decrees adopted between 1961 and 1968 --- the decrees which have accounted for the recent population explosion in the Soviet forced labor camp system. Most recently, the practice of arresting social "parasites" has spread from the USSR to both Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Soviet Antiparasite Decrees

The first in the series of "antiparasite" decrees adopted between 1961 and 1968 was announced in May 1961 in the Vedimosti Verkhovnogo Soveta under the title: "On strengthening the Struggle Against Persons Who Avoid Socially Useful Labor and Who Lead an Antisocial Parasitic Way of Life." Because of the extremely elastic definitions of the offenses which it encompassed, most analysts viewed this decree as a new legal instrument for mass arrests. It empowered courts to direct to labor colonies idlers, speculators, and parasites and confiscation of their personal property was to be a routine matter.

The 1961 decree also introduced the death penalty for the killing of one prisoner by another, for an assault on a member of the administration, and for participation in any organization preparing such acts. This section of the decree is interpreted as intended to be a threat against clandestine organization within the forced labor camps and as a shield of protection for KGB informers within the camps.

A second decree, issued in September 1965, further expanded the legal basis for sentencing hooligans and political offenders to forced labor camps. It provided that sentences could be imposed by resolution of rayon committees or by decree of peoples'

courts and that such resolutions and decrees "shall be final and not subject to appeal." Furthermore, "parasites" were to be identified either on the basis of "statements of citizens" or "on the initiative of state and public organizations."

The categories of those found to be socially dangerous were expanded still more by a September 1966 decree which provided for the imprisonment of "those given to uttering or writing material discrediting the Soviet State" or for participating in "group activities" involving "disobedience in the face of lawful demands of the authorities." Then, in summer 1968, the Supreme Soviet created a whole new complex of forced labor camps for minors.

The decree for minors provided that "a convicted person who reaches 18 years of age while serving sentence is transferred from a labor colony for minors to a corrective labor colony for adults...from a standard-regime labor colony for minors to a standard-regime colony for adults, and from a strict-regime labor colony for minors to a strict regime colony for adults." All corrective labor colonies are subdivided into four basic types, depending on the severity of the penal regime: general, intensified, strict, and special. All political prisoners are automatically assigned to either strict or special regimes.

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| General regime     | : assigned the best jobs, normally some type of work within the camp -- sewing workshops, carpentry, brick making, etc.  |
| Intensified regime | : assigned to more difficult manual labor such as ditchdigging, cement works, or land clearing.  |
| Strict regime      | : assigned to heavy manual labor such as heavy construction or to work in plants where there are health hazards.   |
| Special regime     | : assigned to the heaviest kinds of manual labor such as stone quarrying, lumbering, loading and unloading timber, sawmilling, earth removal, etc. (special regime prisoners are also assigned production norms that are almost impossible to meet). |

New Soviet Legislation

New corrective-labor legislation is due to come into force throughout the USSR as of 1 June 1971. The legislation delineates the three basic types of penal institutions: corrective labor camps, prisons, and educative-labor camps (or, camps for minors). Each of these is in turn subdivided into different categories on the basis of the severity of living and working conditions. However, the language is sufficiently vague to allow a variety of interpretations. As previously noted, the new legislation abrogates none of the antiparasite decrees adopted between 1961 and 1968 --- if anything the legal bases for sentencing political offenders are broadened. Equally important, the new legislation fails to make mention of the special psychiatric hospitals to which so many dissident citizens are arbitrarily committed. The new penal legislation could have shed some light on these psychiatric institutions, but the Soviet authorities deliberately chose not to do so.

Czechoslovakia's Emergency Laws

In Czechoslovakia in 1969, the first anniversary of the Soviet-led invasion and occupation was marked, 19-22 August, by massive but orderly protest demonstrations in Prague and other Czechoslovak cities. The demonstrations, which were quelled by the police and Czechoslovak army troops, culminated in tighter police controls and new "emergency laws" that were issued by the government 22 August. These laws, originally to extend only to the end of December, are by now a matter of permanent legislation.

The Czechoslovak emergency laws broadened police powers and instituted summary court proceedings for political offenders. They provided stiff prison terms for those accused of general disorderliness, of work slowdowns, of being antisocial, anti-Party, or anti-Soviet. They permitted the dismissal of teachers, scientists, unionists, writers -- all opinion molders -- who failed to educate youths or subordinates according to the "principles of socialist society" and for the disbandment of all organs allegedly violating "socialist order." The new laws also allowed a three-month detention of suspects "to ascertain if they are organizers of actions which disturb the public order."

Under application of these laws, the campaign of party and job dismissals had reached the point by mid-1970 where over 250,000 had been affected. Because Czechoslovakia has no provisions for "unemployment," poverty among those fired was widespread. Scattered reports from Prague indicated that at any given time Pankrac prison,

the interrogation center for political suspects, could be found crammed with scores of political prisoners all jailed without indication as to when or if they were to be brought to trial. By early 1971, this vast purge was devastating the economic, political and social life of the country as Czechoslovak intellectuals continued to be dismissed from key jobs and condemned to manual labor or unemployment because they refused to express approval of the 1968 invasion.

In February 1971, former Czech TV commentator Vladimir Skutina, who had already been incarcerated for over a year spending his time either hospitalized or in Pankrac prison, was formally sentenced to two years' imprisonment for having slandered the USSR and for other "antisocial" acts. At the same time, additional action was undertaken to curtail the activities of other writers. As liberal journalists were increasingly fired from their regular jobs, membership in the freelance section of the Czech Journalists' Union had more than doubled. In a letter circulated 19 February to principle Czech media outlets, the union announced its intention to blackball all but 70 of its 170 freelance journalists for reasons of "political unreliability." Ex-journalists in Prague have expressed the fear that this latest crackdown could be the first step towards prosecution under "antiparasite" laws.

#### Poland to Emulate Soviet Labor Camp System?

By the end of February this year, the Polish Council of Ministers was working on a new draft law under provisions of which there will be established a new system of forced labor camps of an "educational nature" for the retraining of "anti-social, incorrigible elements." The Polish Minister of Justice explained to a press conference that the "draft law affects persons over 18 years of age who do not attend school and, being able to work, lead a parasite's life, persistently refusing to engage in socially useful work, making a living in a manner, or from sources inconsistent with the principles of social co-existence, thus endangering the public order." Sanctions provided for in the draft law are: an individual could be warned and assigned a given job, an individual could be assigned to a "social tutor" who would watch over him for three years, or an individual can be sentenced to a minimum three year term to "enlightenment by labor" in labor camps which will be run by the Polish Ministry of the Interior. This draft law was presented to the Polish parliament on 11 March 1971.

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13 July 1970

# SOVIET PRISONERS APPEAL TO WESTERN COMMUNISTS

By DAVID FLOYD, Communist Affairs Correspondent

DISSIDENTS in Soviet prison camps have drawn up an appeal to Western Communist parties to use their influence to help free political prisoners and restore civil rights in the Soviet Union.

The appeal, mainly the work of Yuri Galanskov, 31, who is serving a seven-year sentence in a camp, was recently smuggled out of Russia, as was first reported in *The Sunday Telegraph*.

He bases his argument on the "testament," written by Signor Togliatti, former leader of the Italian Communist party, who said that Italian Communists could not understand why the Stalinist régime of oppression continued in Russia.

"If this question evokes surprise and, at the best, annoyance in Western Communists, for us it is a matter of life and death," the appeal says.

There is, he says, a direct connection between the existence of Communist parties in the West and the nature of Soviet domestic and foreign policy.

Ordinary people in the West assumed that Communists there want to set up the same sort of system as in the Soviet Union.

The Communists claimed that their Communism would not be like the Soviet version and that Communism did not necessarily involve suppression of democracy.

"They also argued," Galanskov says, "that the Soviet Communist

party was capable of reforming the Soviet system and restoring democratic freedoms."

In that case, Galanskov says, Western Communists should demand that Soviet leaders:

1—Carry out a complete and general amnesty of all persons condemned for their political or religious beliefs,

2 Reform their policy on punishment of people with different political and religious beliefs.

## Free opposition

He believes that Western Communists can exert considerable influence over Soviet policy.

Representatives of Western Communist parties are becoming ever more frequently a sort of free opposition to Soviet policy within the Communist movement.

This circumstance acquires extreme importance because it makes a dialogue possible inside the movement and gives promise of reform.

The leaders of Western Communist parties must understand clearly that the Soviet leaders maintain a system of oppression and limitation of democratic and personal freedom, not because they do not want to change it, but because they do not know what to do."

Galanskov is critical of the failure of Western intellectuals to influence Moscow.

"During the years of Stalin's dictatorship they spent more time being surprised at it than opposing it," he says. "They were shocked by the extent of the evil and the enormity of our tragedy.

"But they did not have the intellectual or moral strength to oppose effectively the explosion of diabolic forces. They lacked principles and made political compromises.

"Behind sensational reports about Russian concentration camps, Western intellectuals did not hear the groans from the other side of the barbed wire."

POSEY  
February 1971  
(excerpts only)

## A REVIEW OF PUNITIVE POLICY

The first word about an article at the disposal of samizdat by Yuri Galanskov written from the 17th section of Dubrovlag appeared in the Chronicle of Current Events No. 1 (12) of 28 February 1970. It is said that because of the article, Yu. Daniel and V. Ponkin were sent to the Vladimirsk prison. For a long time this article was unavailable in the West until it turned up in the editorial offices of the English newspaper Sunday Telegraph. On 12 July the paper carried a detailed note on Galanskov's article, calling him "one of the principal dissidents of Russia."... -Editor.

....Through a fortunate chain of circumstances, such events as the hunger-strike of February 1968, "The Letter of Six," and the collective hunger-strike in support of Alexander Ginzberg, sooner or later become widely known, both at home and abroad. The latter is the most important from the point of view of our national interests. The Western press

language, publicize facts of official tyranny and crude coercion and force governmental organs and officials to act. In this way, the Western press and radio carry out the mission of an organized opposition, which at the present time is lacking in Russia, and thereby stimulate our national development. Unfortunately, the West often limits itself to sensationalism and speculation and does not display sufficient persistence in raising questions that are so vitally important.

During the years of the Stalin dictatorship the intelligentsia of the West spent more time being surprised than in protesting. It was shocked by the cruelty of the evil and enormity of our tragedy. The intelligentsia itself lacked the spiritual integrity and moral strength with which to effectively withstand the devil's powers. It proved itself unprincipled, bargained with its conscience and made political compromises. Western intelligentsia heard nothing about the sensational reports of Russian concentration camps, not even the moans from behind the barbed wire. And no sensationalism helped us protect our intelligentsia from physical annihilation. No sensationalism helped us stop the process of exhausting the human resources of a nation...

.... In 1964 the Secretary General of the Italian Communist Party, Palmiro Togliatti, in his "Memorandum" published in Pravda, emphatically raised the question of why in Russia to this day a regime of suppression and restriction of democratic and personal liberties is still retained, as introduced by Stalin. The question remained unanswered.

But if this question preplexes and even vexes the Communists of the West, for us, it is a question of life and death. For us a regime of suppression and restriction of democratic and personal liberties means the suppression of the political and economic activity of our national powers; it crushes and strangles any creative initiative, kills man's faith and deprives him of hope.

Human confusion and lost faith, crushed under the ruins of destroyed hope, shatter the magic crystal of a world outlook and corrupt the soul. This is the danger which threatens Russia from within.

At times it is said that the West is demoralized by freedom. This is hardly the case. I would say that even freedom is not enough to overcome the difficulties facing the West today.

We need freedom in order to develop national self-determination.

We need freedom in order to put into operation all the necessary mechanisms serving to accomplish that task.

We need freedom in order to fulfill our obligations to Russia and to life.

There is simply land, and then there is the Russian land on which you stand and which feeds you. And if today in your land people who answered with faith the call of their conscience sit behind barbed wire, then you must remember this, for you answer for that land and for the life on that land.

The position of P. Togliatti and criticism by Western Communist parties of the internal and foreign policy of the CPSU is not an accidental phenomenon. There is a direct connection between the nature of the domestic and the foreign policy of the CPSU and the fact of the existence of Western Communist parties. It is this.

Italians, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Americans, Australians, Japanese, etc. ask the Communists of Italy, France, England, America, Australia, and Japan: are you offering us the kind of social structure in which all political liberties will be liquidated, in which opposing ideas will be declared illegal and then opponents will be repressed and thrown behind barbed wire under the muzzle of a submachine gun? Are you offering us a social structure in which not only will opposition parties be impossible, but even a "Union of Communards" will sit behind barbed wire? Are you offering us a social system in which a mother will be torn away from her child (the L. Bororaz-Brukhman case), a father from his children (K. Babitskiy), husband from his wife (P. Litvinov) and deported because of an ordinary show of protest?

"Not under any conditions!" - Western Communists will be forced to say. We condemn such a policy and dissociate ourselves from it. Our Communism will not be like that, we will protect all political and creative freedoms, we will be tolerant and open minded. Then Communists of the West ask:

"And why should we believe you? You yourselves insist that the criterion of the truth of any doctrine is practice, but practice has shown that two great Communist powers (the USSR and China) have carried out, and are carrying out, a policy which even you yourselves have condemned, and are condemning. More than that, two great Communist powers are on the brink of a war which can lead to the annihilation of the Russian and Chinese nations. You speak to us of difficulties and mistakes, but how can you prove that in the very nature of Communism there are not inherent such phenomena as Stalinism and Maoism? How can you prove that your Italian, French, or English Communism will not become a national tragedy for the Italian, French and English nations?

You want to convince us that Communism can guarantee democratic and personal liberties more fully than can the West. Consider, Communists, the Western system to whose liquidation you are dedicated and which grants you all the organizational and technical opportunities to accomplish that end. You have your own parties, your own newspapers, your own publishing houses, and your own bookstores and enjoy all political liberties, while in Russia a group of young Marxists, the "Union of Communards," sits in a prison camp....

....You condemn such a policy and dissociate yourselves from it. You assure us that a regime of suppression and restriction of democratic and personal liberties is not inherent in the nature of Marxism..... You assure us that the CPSU is able to overcome its mistakes and to outlive the regime of suppression and restriction of democratic and personal liberties. You assure us of this. Then, demand of the CPSU the following:

- 1) to grant complete and general amnesty to persons convicted for political and religious beliefs and
- 2) to reform their policy on punishment of persons for their political and religious beliefs

For you, who think the same as the CPSU, bear a moral-political responsibility for all this. But if you evade this responsibility, if you dismiss the CPSU policy on punishment with the argument that you cannot interfere in the domestic affairs of a brotherly Communist party, then we must accuse you of immorality and of being politically unprincipled. And we will tell the electorate directly that a regime of suppression and restriction of democratic and personal liberties is inherent in the v

communists. We will declare you outlaws, drive you underground, and will keep you behind barbed wire so long as the CPSU keeps behind barbed wire all those who think differently from it.....

....Ever more frequently, representatives of various Western Communist parties are acting as a free opposition to the policy of the CPSU within the Communist movement. This circumstance acquires extreme importance in view of the fact that it makes possible a dialogue within the Communist movement.

Regardless of how much talk there is about the independent nature of the laws of national development, it is still impossible to deny that Russia largely depends on the character of the evolution of the CPSU as the ruling party. But the character of the evolution of the CPSU is directly dependent not only on a dialogue with the West, but also, and first of all, on dialogue within the international Communist movement. The leaders of Western Communist parties must understand clearly that the CPSU preserves the system of suppression and restriction of democratic and personal liberties, not because the CPSU does not want to renounce it, but because the CPSU cannot renounce it, and does not know what to do.

For example, more than ten years have passed since a constitutional commission was established to draw up a new constitution, but Russia still lives under the so-called Stalin constitution, in which some articles guarantee the most extensive liberties, while others completely abrogate the liberties proclaimed in the first articles, or entrust this abrogation to administrative organs. This shocking example of legal sterility forces us to ponder many things.

Another example. At the 21<sup>st</sup> Congress of the CPSU a party Program was adopted in which it was stated that in 20 years the material-technical base of Communism would be created. There are other fantastic claims which force us to doubt the theory of the Program itself.....

LONDON OBSERVER  
3 January 1971

# INSIDE RUSSIA'S CONCENTRATION CAMPS

CPYRGHT

**PETER REDDAWAY**  
reveals for the first time  
the full extent of  
Russia's prison camp  
system. He estimates  
that about a million  
people are held in 1,000  
camps inside the Soviet  
Union. 'As the overall  
picture steadily builds  
up,' he writes, 'the im-  
pression created is grim  
indeed.'

'RUSSIA is entangled in a network of camps, where, despite all the international conventions signed by the Soviet Government, forced labour and cruel exploitation are the norm, where people are systematically kept hungry and constantly humiliated, where human dignity is debased. Through these camps there passes an uninterrupted human flow, numbered in millions, which sends people back to society in a physically and morally crippled state. This is the result of a deliberate penal policy, worked out by

experts and expounded by them in special handbooks with a cynicism worthy of the concentration camp experts of the Third Reich.'

So reads an underground document from Soviet Russia, one of the many now flooding out of the country devoted to exposing the inhumanity of the Kremlin's treatment of dissenters. The eyes of the world were opened to this inhumanity by the revelations in Anatoly Marchenko's book, 'My Testimony,' published in 1969 and serialised in *The Observer*. As the overall picture steadily builds up, confirmed and much elaborated by the new material, the impression created is grim indeed.

The document just quoted takes the form of an open letter to Alexander Tvardovsky, the recently sacked editor of the literary journal *Novy Mir*. It was signed by seven prisoners, and has reached the West together with portraits of its authors. The artist is Yury Ivanov, himself one of the seven. He drew them late in 1969 in Camp 17a of the notorious complex, deep in the Mordovian swamps, 300 miles south-east of Moscow, where some 20,000 prisoners are detained.

The best known of Ivanov's fellow-prisoners are the poet-pacifist Yury Galanskov, aged 30, and the littérateur (he rejects the description 'writer') Alexander Ginzburg, 34. A year after

in January 1968 for their literary activities. Galanskov, chronically ill with stomach ulcers, is forced to do manual labour until, periodically, he collapses and has to be rushed to the primitive hospital at Camp 3. In April 1970 the *samizdat* (underground) journal, *A Chronicle of Current Events*, reported: 'Last time, in March, he spent only a week in the camp before being quickly sent back to the hospital. Typically enough, his wife and mother were being told at the very same time by Bobylev, head of the medical department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs [MVD] in Moscow, and his assistant, Mrs Shakh, that the state of Galanskov's health was completely satisfactory and he did not require hospitalisation.'

Ginzburg—a former junior sculling champion of the USSR—has been surviving with less difficulty. But he has shown deep compassion for the suffering around him. Early in 1970 he recorded a message in Camp 17a on a home-made tape-recorder and was punished accordingly with transfer to the dreaded prison at Vladimir, 100 miles east of Moscow.

On the tape Ginzburg said: 'In the Vladimir prison, in that grave for the living, are my friends Yuli Daniel and Valeri Ronkin. [Daniel has since been released.] Here in the camp there is only one doctor from among the prisoners and everyone goes in danger of his life. I have just accompanied my close friend,

the Latvian Jan Kapitsins, to his last resting-place.' The *Chronicle* records that Kapitsins died on 16 January at the age of 52, shortly after Ivanov had drawn his portrait. He had been serving a 15-year sentence for opposing the Russification of Latvia. Other deaths reported by the *Chronicle* as occurring at about the same time were those of a 67-year-old Lithuanian in Camp 3 and two 56-year-olds in Camp 17a, a Lithuanian, who hanged himself, and an Estonian.

Three other signatories of the Mordovia document belonged to the All-Russian Social-Christian Union for the Liberation of the People, which was founded in 1964. Caught and sentenced in 1967-68, this group consisted mainly of young staff and graduates of Leningrad University. It advocated a parliamentary system with democratic freedoms, and a mixed economy. One of the three, who got 13 years, is the orientalist Mikhail Sado, now 33. Recently he met a Swede who was about to be released from Mordovia, and asked him to help save the group's founder, Igor Ogurtsov, also an orientalist. Ogurtsov, who was sentenced to 15 years, is in Vladimir, and is in poor shape. The Swede found the power and warmth of Sado's personality—reflected in his portrait movingly impressive.

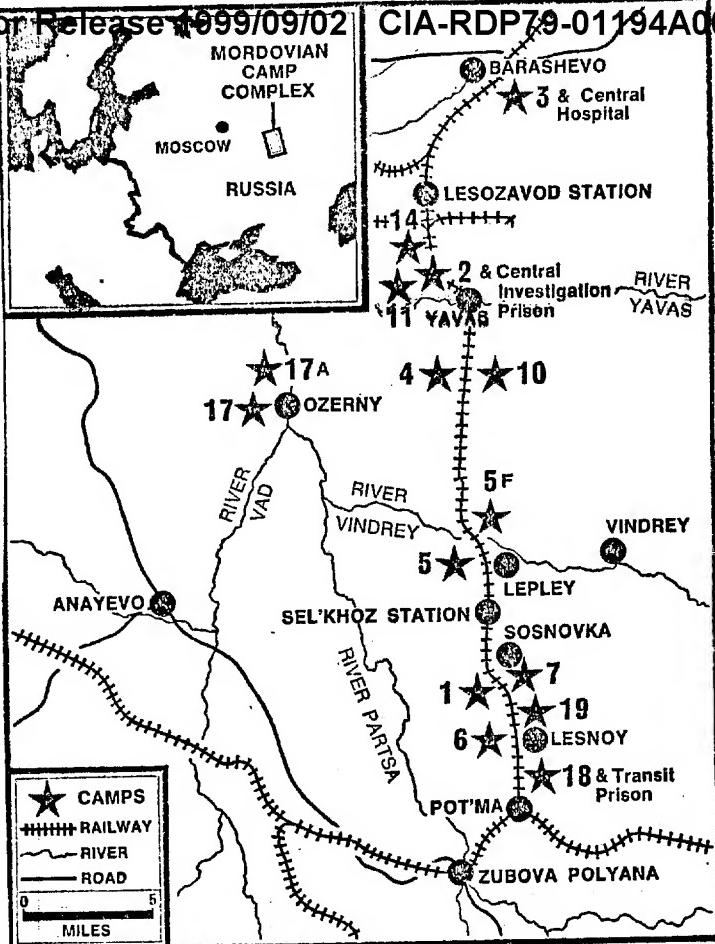
The other two signatories from this group are Vyacheslav Platonov, a 29-year-old specialist on Ethiopia, and Leonid Berodin, a headmaster of 32. In April 1970 the *Chronicle* reported that

despite a serious hunger-strike, Ginzburg was still being held in the prison of Camp 17a, having been put there the previous December for taking part in a hunger-strike.

The seventh signatory is the Latvian poet Victor Kalnins, sentenced to 10 years in Riga in 1962 for alleged participation in a 'nationalist organisation'; the sentence provoked widespread protests from the Latvian intelligentsia. Kalnins is highly respected for his courage. When the camp administration denied him a parcel from his relatives in November 1969 his fellow-prisoners began a hunger-strike in his support.

As for Yury Ivanov, the *Chronicle* reveals that his lot has been the hardest of all. Nevertheless, Gerald Brooke, who met him briefly by chance in 1969, was struck by his high morale and attractive personality. Born in 1927, he is a son of the Russian artist Evgeny Sivers, who was shot in 1938 and posthumously rehabilitated. Ivanov was first jailed with two friends in 1947—for skipping lectures on Marxism-Leninism—and all three were brutally beaten up; one died as a result. Released early through pressure from relatives, Ivanov trained at the Academy of Arts and was admitted to the Artists' Union. In 1955, however, the KGB arrested him for 'spreading anti-Soviet literature' and for 'forming an organisation' whose members 'were not discovered.' He had to work, with 8,000 other 'politicals,' on the construction of the hydro-electric station at Kuibyshev.

His case was reviewed in 1956, but he was not released as he persisted in denying any guilt. He escaped, only to be wounded, caught within a week, and given a new 10-year sentence. In 1963 he got 10 more years for 'anti-Soviet propaganda in the camp.' Three of them he served in Vladimir, the next two in Camp 10 in Mordovia. Both these institutions have the inhuman 'special regime,' which involves, among other things, only 1,300 calories of food per day (adequate for a three-year-old child). In 1968 he was transferred to the strict-regime Camp 11 (2,400 calories, the norm for a nine-year-old), then a year later to the prison in Saransk, the capital of Mordovia. Here the KGB spent four months trying—in vain—to make him not only recant but also donate to the State a foreign legacy he had received. Finally he was transferred again in autumn 1969 to Camp 17a, the



The notorious Mordovian complex. This map, prepared with the help of Gerald Brooke, will appear in 'Ferment in the Ukraine,' edited by Michael Browne, to be published shortly by Macmillan.

home of those few prisoners whom—as his portraits show—the administration cannot break and whose ideas and moral authority they fear.

In the last two years these prisoners have combated the vindictive and arbitrary behaviour of their camp's administration by, at intervals, launching hunger-strokes. A prominent part was played in these by Yuli Daniel and his friend Valeri Ronkin, a Leningrad engineer.

In February 1968 a group including these two struck for 10 days until they won several concessions. In particular the administration promised that it would not in future deprive them

camp authorities made concessions after prolonged discussions, so the strike was called off.

On 16 May 1969 Ginzburg began a strike in protest against having been forbidden for two whole years to marry his fiancée: 'For four successive days,' the *Chronicle* wrote, 'he was sent out to work, although he was losing more and more strength. Halfway through the fourth day Ginzburg was finally put in solitary confinement. This should be done on the first day of a hunger-strike. On the eleventh day they began to give him artificial feeding, but on 31 May the camp doctor considered that he looked too well, and from 1 to 4 June he was not fed.'

By this time Ginzburg's friends were protesting vigorously with petitions and their own strikes. In addition, 'Yuli Daniel sent a statement to the Attorney-General about the attitude of the camp doctor to the starving Ginzburg. In his statement

Daniel mentioned that the doctor was the same man who, during the recent mass food-poisoning in the women's zone of Camp 17, had left a dying woman without giving her medical help. On 10 June Ginzburg and his friends ended their strike.'

In the end Ginzburg was at last allowed to marry—and Daniel and Ronkin were sent to Vladimir. This vindictiveness soon sparked off a new wave of strikes in November, followed by ones tied to International Human Rights Day—in December. Camps 3, 17a and 19 were the ones involved. Further strikes have already been reported by the Nobel Prize-winning writer, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, as having occurred in December 1970.

The wealth of information on the Mordovia camps has, until recently, tended to create the impression that few similar camp complexes exist elsewhere. Now, thanks mainly to the persistence of the Soviet Baptists in reporting the fate of the 500 or so of their brethren imprisoned in recent years, we know that the camp network covers almost the whole country. Already the exact locations and addresses of 202 camps have been established, and the approximate location of many more is known.

The 202 stretch from the Arctic Circle in the extreme north-west to Chita Region on the Manchurian border, from the dreaded Yakutia in north-east Siberia to warm and sunny Odessa on the Black Sea. All the data put together, and especially the serial numbers in the camp addresses, suggest a figure of about 1,000 camps in all. As each camp appears to hold an average of 1,000 prisoners, the total camp population at any one time would seem to be of the order of a million. This compares with a figure of 12-15 million at the time of Stalin's death in 1953. It must also be remembered, however, that the number of people under one or another form of restraint far surpasses the camp population: as yet there is no means of even estimating the numbers of the inmates of prisons and prison mental hospitals; and also the many people subject to various types of exile.

Similarly, the total number of political prisoners can still scarcely be estimated: it is almost certainly of the order of tens of thousands. Whether the total is rising or falling is also hard to say. As regards Mordovia we know only that as the post-war Ukrainian and Baltic opponents

of sovietisation gradually die off or finish their terms, they are more or less replaced by people imprisoned—as the seven signatories of Camp 17a say in their letter—for expressing and circulating beliefs and ideas which differ from the official ones.' They go on: 'Because of the "intensification of the ideological struggle" the number of such people is growing. They are sentenced for expressing public disagreement with this or that act of the Government, and for reading, possessing or circulating forbidden literature, the list of which is longer even than the famous Indexes of the Vatican.'

What role does Soviet legislation play in all this? The Criminal Code and the so-called 'Bases of Corrective-Labour Legislation' proclaim as a fundamental principle: 'The imposition of punishment does not have as an aim the causing of physical suffering or the lowering of human dignity.' This principle

is hardly borne out by the detailed regulations—many of them semi-secret documents—which govern prisoners' daily lives, especially in the strict- and special-regime camps.

Ration scales are secret, but basic facts about them appear repeatedly in underground documents. Anatoly Marchenko writes concerning the strict-regime camp: 'Prisoners never set eyes on fresh vegetables, butter and many other indispensable products: these are even prohibited from sale at the camp stall, as is sugar.' As a result, 'some prisoners are driven by the permanent malnutrition to kill and eat crows and, if they are lucky, dogs. In the autumn of 1967 one prisoner from Camp 11 in Mordovia found a way of getting potatoes: he over-ate and died. Hunger reigns even more harshly in Vladimir prison and in the special-regime camps.'

As for the arbitrary powers of the authorities, these allow them

—at whim—to forbid the saying of prayers, obstruct individuals' spare-time pursuits, or ban food-parcels even after a prisoner has served the first half of his term (when they are not permitted) and relatives have begun sending them. Marchenko writes: 'I don't know whether there exist anywhere on earth outside our country such conditions for political prisoners: legalised lawlessness, plus legalised hunger plus legalised forced labour.'

At the same time he appealed to the 'humanists and progressive people in other countries—those who raise their voice in defence of political prisoners in Greece and Portugal, South Africa and Spain' to do the same in regard to the Soviet Union. Later he wrote to the chairman of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), asking him 'to send a mission to Russia to examine the conditions of Soviet political prisoners in the Mordovian camps and Vladimir

prison, and to furnish them with essential aid.' This request, he pointed out, used exactly the same wording as the appeal of the Soviet Red Cross to the ICRC published in *Izvestia* two weeks earlier, concerning political prisoners in Indonesia.

Finally, Yury Galanskov, in a recent article of his own smuggled out of Camp 17a, makes similar appeals to the Western Communist parties and the outside world in general.

The Western Press, and especially the Western radio-stations broadcasting in Russian, publicise arbitrariness and acts of crude coercion by Soviet official personnel and thus force the State bodies and officials to take quick action. In this way the Western Press and radio are fulfilling the tasks of what is at present lacking in Russia, an organised opposition, and thereby stimulating our national development.'

TIME  
6 June 1969

CPYRGHT

## A Day in the Life of Yuli Daniel

*The struggle against cold in the camp is waged in a unique way: they took away all our belongings, sweater, jacket and so on. Solitary confinement is not just cold, it's dog cold, because they give you a blanket only at night. The rest of the time you get only bare boards and a cement floor. Among the crimes punishable by solitary confinement: not waking up when they bang on the bars, not standing up before an officer, brewing coffee or toasting bread, not going to political lectures, growing a few blades of dill in your area and refusing to trample on them, or not fulfilling your norm.*

THAT cry of controlled anger comes from Soviet Writer Yuli Daniel, who is serving the fourth year of a five-year sentence at hard labor for "slanderizing the Soviet state" in his short stories that were published abroad. Daniel is in a labor camp at Potma in the Volga basin, along with Fellow Writer Aleksandr Ginzburg, whose crime was compiling a record of the February 1966 trial of Daniel and Writer Andrei Sinyavsky (who is serving his seven-year sentence in another part of the same camp, also for "slanderizing the state").

The persecutions of camp life have not quenched the spirit of Daniel and Ginzburg. Now, along with four other prisoners, they have written an open letter to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, urging "corrective legislation" to change the regulations in camps like Potma where, according to the signers, "especially dangerous political prisoners" are held. Last week their letter was being circulated widely in Moscow.

duce containing vitamins is impossible. Any one of us at any minute can be deprived of the right to buy anything at the kiosk, or be put in solitary confinement, where the rations may be reduced to 1,300 calories.

"The camp administration can arbitrarily curtail the time of meetings" with relatives, and "a considerable number of our letters and the letters sent to us disappear without a trace. We cannot write about our situation; such letters always disappear." Thus, the prisoners add, the lawmakers of the Supreme Soviet "will understand how difficult it is for us to defend what remains of our miserable rights."

At compulsory political meetings, the prisoners are given a "beginner's course of political literacy, repeated from year to year," and conducted by "half-educated officers mechanically reading what is written or repeating it in their own words. A question that the officer cannot answer (and these are in the majority) may be regarded as 'provocative' and the person who asked it is punished in one way or another. If you express your own view you risk a new trial and sentence."

"The constant human degradation and physical coercion must also, probably, be called 'education.' The head of Camp 17a, Major Antonov, orders all papers to be taken away from political prisoners in solitary confinement and recommends that they use their fingers instead of toilet paper. Duty Officer Lieut. Takashhev orders a political

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prisoner to be handcuffed, and an overseer, in the execution of his duty, beats him up."

The letter reminds the Deputies to the Supreme Soviet that it is within their power "to reinforce illegality or to rigorously supervise the observance of our human and civil rights." Moreover, "all this physical and psychological coercion of political prisoners does not lead—in fact, cannot—lead to the desired results, if only because they have not reckoned on our strength. Ill treatment can only break the very weakest. Surely this is not

worth the effort."

"Our food is tasteless, monotonous and contains hardly any vitamins," the letter said. "Although we cannot really speak of constant hunger"—the maximum daily ration is 2,413 calories, mostly starch—"constant vitamin hunger is an indisputable fact. It is no accident that in the camps so many people suffer from stomach ailments." Food parcels are forbidden, the men said, and even in the kiosks, where they can buy five rubles' worth of goods a month, "buying green vegetables or other pro-

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH, London  
13 September 1970

# 'I'm tired, tired,' says Daniel

from DEV MURARKA: Moscow, 12 September

CPYRGHT

SOVIET author Yuli Daniel, 44, emerged from Vladimir jail tonight at the end of his five-year sentence for slandering the Soviet State. 'I am tired, tired,' he said.

He was met by his student son, Alexander, who drove him 200 miles to Kaluga, where an apartment had been made ready for him.

Daniel was sentenced at a secret trial in February, 1966, the sentence being calculated from the date of his arrest in September, 1965.

The trial, which became famous as the Daniel-Sinyavsky trial, caused an international uproar and much embarrassment to the Soviet Union. Daniel's co-accused was Andrei Sinyavsky, who was sentenced to seven years' hard labour.

Daniel and Sinyavsky were tried and sentenced for publishing works abroad under the pseudonyms of Nikolai Arzhak and Abram Tertz. These writings were considered scandalous by the Soviet authorities. They were mostly in the nature of

biting satire on the Soviet society.

Their case became a *cause célèbre* and many Soviet as well as foreign writers, public figures and others, including Communists, protested.

During Daniel's incarceration, there were periodic reports that he was being maltreated at the Potma labour camp. When he was moved to the 'hard-regime' Vladimir prison, dissident intellectuals in Moscow reported that it was as punishment for breaches of discipline, including hunger strikes.

It was in October 1968 that Daniel's wife Larissa was sentenced to four years' exile for taking part in a demonstration against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The demonstration was held in the Red Square. She is now in Chuna, in Siberia.

For the next six months, according to Soviet law, Daniel must live under police surveillance. According to his friends, however, he will be allowed to visit his wife in Siberia. It is not known if he will be allowed to resume his profession of a translator into Russian.

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# *Resistance in Soviet Concentration Camps*

By PAUL BARTON

Paul Barton is AFL-CIO representative in Europe.

**S**OVIET prison camps today are in many respects different from what they were in Stalin's time. The change which has taken place during the last 20 years or so is of course just as important as the indubitable continuity of the dreadful institution.

Unfortunately, too many students of this change tend to overlook one of the most basic differences—namely, the fact that the inmates are no longer that helpless crowd, resigned to slow death, which they used to be in the Thirties and the Forties when the camp system was at its height. The prisoners' resistance which spread through the concentration camps during the last years of Stalin's rule has survived, though with varying intensity and in forms that keep changing, until this very day.

When this paramount fact is ignored, attention tends to be focused excessively on such changes as the considerable decrease in the number of political prisoners, the improved diet, the possibility of receiving visits by relatives, etc. So it then seems natural to jump to the conclusion that the development in the camps is an outstanding example of the liberalization of the Soviet regime.

But that is a typical case of that distortion against which the dissident Soviet historian Andrei Amalrik—who himself is now serving a three-year term in a concentration camp—so convincingly warns when, in his essay "Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?", he emphasizes that many observers take for a reform what is in fact the decline and disintegration of the Soviet regime.

On the contrary, when the prisoners' resistance is duly taken into account, a great deal of the improvements introduced in the camps during the last two decades are seen to be concessions wrested from the authorities by their victims.

It was not after Stalin's death, but as early as 1948/1949, exactly at the time when the resistance was beginning to make itself felt in the camps, that the material situation of the prisoners started improving. Among the most important changes brought about at that time were the improvement of food and clothing, the separation of the political from the common law prisoners, the introduction of wages and the control of mortality.

, At the same time, however, in an obvious effort to break the nascent resistance, the rules of the regime imposed on political prisoners were made even harsher than before. But this did not help. Little by little, the resistance got organized and the process of change received a tremendous impetus from the mass strikes and uprisings that shook the entire camp.

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The best known among them are those The fugitive was evidently still alive, but that broke out in Karaganda in 1952, in the sentry would not let the prisoners or the Norilsk in 1953 and Vorkuta in 1953 and medical orderly go anywhere near the two 1954, in Kingir in 1954, in Taishet in early rows of barbed wire between which he lay 1955, in Khabarovsk in summer 1955 and in to give him first aid. So they all began to Vorkuta again in summer 1955 and once roar and howl, paying no attention to the more in fall of the same year. The most bursts of tommy gun fire over their heads. important changes that were eventually to It went on and on for at least an hour and transform the camps from what they were a half, until the wounded man was taken to under Stalin to their present form were ac- the guardhouse and a medical orderly called tually agreed upon during the bargaining the in.

authorities agreed upon during the bargaining the in authorities undertook with the insurgents: Between these two extremes, there are the right to send a letter once a month and individual and collective hunger strikes, in to receive a family visit once a year, the individual petitions and complaints with which removal of the iron bars from the huts, no a great many prisoners keep flooding the more locking of the huts for the night, the authorities and, last but not least, relentless elimination of a registration number sewn efforts to undermine the morale and self- on the prisoner's uniform, the eight-hour confidence of the camp officers by involving working day, the revision of the political them in perilous political arguments or just prisoners' sentences, the liberation of minors, by holding them up to ridicule during the invalids and prisoners having served two obligatory political instruction sessions or thirds of their sentences.

And some of the later revolts, like those in Vorkuta in 1954 and 1955, took place in order to force the authorities to implement the measures promised in the initial bargain.

What is more, several improvements introduced at the time of the prisoners' uprisings were cancelled a few years later, when the situation in the camps was no longer so explosive. This happened, for instance, with the rule that one day's work with the fulfilment of the output quota was to count for more than one day of imprisonment. The real concern of the authorities was thus demonstrated beyond any doubt: it was not to reform the inhuman institution, but merely to bring the resistance under control. The fact that this objective could be reached only by adopting far-reaching changes was no merit of the Kremliar.

changes was no merit of the Kremlin. tremendous impact on all the inmates. It is At present, the resistance in the camps today by no means exceptional to see com- does not seem to be directed by strictly or- mon law prisoners help and protect the ganized underground groups as in the early "politicals" persecuted by the camp admin- Fifties. It takes a wide variety of forms, istration. Such was, for instance, the experi- which range from simple solidarity and ence of Yuli Daniel during his imprisonment support given by the mass of the prisoners in Mordvinia. to those among them who are weak or ill. It can thus be said that little by little or whose physical strength has been under- the camp system had become a school of mined in the punishment cells, "special re- political opposition and resistance. And this gime" camps or jails on the one hand to is true in still another sense. While in the dangerously explosive mass demonstrations early Fifties the struggle was mainly di- rected and organized by men who like the

One such demonstration, which took place Ukrainian partisans, had fought the Soviet political prisoners, has been described by us with very few exceptions carried out by Anatoly Marchenko in "My Testimony" (pp. people who learned to fight only after they 298-301). It occurred when an inmate was got into a camp.

resistance, was merely a dissident writer so little interested in the political life of his country that until his arrival in the camp he believed that there were no political prisoners left.

Marchenko's life story is even more striking. Today a typical revolutionary who is likely to die for his convictions at the age of 32 or 33, Marchenko was a completely apolitical foreman at the building sites until he accidentally got into trouble when a fight broke out in a workers' hostel.

This fact that the concentration camps have become such schools of resistance and political opposition explains why the Soviet authorities have been increasingly reluctant to send genuine oppositionists there.

While Yuli Daniel was sentenced to a camp for secretly publishing a few literary works abroad, his wife Larissa, after organizing a street demonstration against the invasion of Czechoslovakia, was merely exiled to a remote region. More typically, the great revolutionary, General Grigorievko, was shut up in a special lunatic asylum where the danger of communicating his ideas to the other inmates is even more remote. And the same is happening to many others who are considered too dangerous for imprisonment in the camps—to such an extent that the confinement of perfectly healthy people in special mental institutions has become an important instrument of what some consider as a liberalization of the Soviet penitentiary system.

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## *Extermination in Soviet Concentration Camps*

By PAUL BARTON

Paul Barton is European representative of the AFL-CIO.

CPYRGHT

"At least 10 to 15 million people perished in the torture chambers of the NKVD [secret police] from torture and execution, in camps for exiled kulaks [rich peasants] and camps 'without the right of correspondence' (which were in fact the prototypes of the Fascist death camps where, for example, thousands of prisoners were machine-gunned because of 'overcrowding' or as a result of 'special orders').

"People perished in the mines of Norilsk and Vorkuta from freezing, starvation, and exhausting labor, at countless construction projects, in timber-cutting, building of canals, or simply during transportation in prison trains, in the overcrowded holds of 'death ships' in the Sea of Okhotsk, and during the resettlement of entire peoples, the Crimean Tartars, the Volga Germans, the Kalmyks, and other Caucasus peoples" (Andrei D. Sakharov, *Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom*, Penguin Books, 1969, page 47.)

This blunt statement of the prominent Soviet nuclear physicist and human rights pioneer contrasts strikingly with the tortuous reasoning of many Western observers who have claimed that, because of their tremendous economic role, Stalin's concentration camps fundamentally differed from Hitler's in that they were meant to exploit, not exterminate.

Ever since concentration camps were established in Russia soon after the October Revolution, one of their main functions has been to "liquidate" the "enemy." Naturally, this has never been their sole function; and only for limited periods of time did it become the predominant one. So the way it has been carried out has been changing over the 50 years of the institution's existence, constantly adjusting to the changing circumstances.

Until around 1930, when the camp population was fairly small, the material conditions and the work were more or less bearable. Actual hunger was rare, the prisoners had adequate shelter, and they received the warm clothing necessary in the climate of the Far North where the camps were located. At the same time, they were subjected to all kinds of sadistic treatment by the guards, inclusive of executions without trial.

Then the number of camp inmates leaped from several tens of thousands to several millions. The loss of so many workers, at the very time of the total mobilization of men and resources, caused enormous damage to the national economy. The only way to limit the damage was to reintegrate the prisoners into the production process by transforming the camps into huge economic establishments. In this connection, purely

extent eliminated while the material conditions deteriorated radically.

By 1932-33, the cost of a prisoner's upkeep had already fallen to something like one-third of the average wage of hired labor. Due to absolutely inadequate clothing and shelter, cold became a persistent feature of camp life. Working hours increased. Medical care was appalling. Food supply per prisoner was drastically reduced.

Moreover, the food rations were sharply differentiated according to the degree of fulfillment of the output quota by the individual convict. So hunger pushed the forced laborers to increase their output, while the extra effort required could not be compensated by the additional food earned. During this period, which lasted some 20 years, slow death became the common lot of the camp inmates. Far from saving their lives, economic exploitation became the very tool of their extermination.

What is more, though to a large extent eliminated sadistic treatment of convicts did not disappear altogether, it only became more selective and purposeful. For instance, it was applied to punish those who had infringed the camp regulations or systematically failed to fulfill the output quota, and especially to those who tried to break out of the camp. Even executions without trial occurred during those two decades. Though infrequent, when they were carried out it was on a large scale.

The regular extermination through exploitation became dependent on a continuous flow of massive new arrivals. Whenever the flow diminished, the pursuit of the extermination threatened to reduce the number of prisoners and jeopardize the smooth functioning of all those plants that relied on forced labor. Therefore, on those occasions, temporary reforms were adopted to stabilize the camp population until such time as massive inflow of fresh manpower would resume.

Such situations arose in 1939, in 1943, and around 1950. In all three cases, the reason was that the death toll paid by the country for Stalin's policy—even the 1943 crisis was due not only to war losses but also to mass terror—resulted in a population crisis in which continued mass deportation of the labor force threatened to disrupt the economy, and indeed the whole life of the country, for good. Invariably, the first measures adopted to stabilize the camp population aimed at keeping the prisoner longer through introduction of longer sentences, refusal to release the convicts at the end of the sentence, etc. But invariably these measures proved inadequate as long as so many prisoners were dying after a few years spent in the camp.

Therefore, they were followed by other measures which sought to reduce the death rate among the convicts through a strict control of mortality and an improvement of medical care, of nutrition, of clothing and of the material conditions of detention in general, as well as of working conditions.

However, the 1939 and 1943 crises were of short duration. The first was overcome when the annexation of Eastern Poland, of Bukhovina, with a total population of 22-23

million, provided the camps with a new and rich source of supply of labor force. The second was over by summer 1944 when the camps began to benefit from the advance of the Soviet army: the liberation of the Soviet territory previously held by the Germans and the penetration into Eastern and Central Europe was accompanied by mass deportations of the population, closely followed by those affecting the liberated prisoners of war and the returning soldiers of the victorious army. The improvements in the treatment of the camp inmates did not last longer than the crisis itself.

It was not the same thing with the third crisis which afflicted the camps around 1950. The population crisis, which had been steadily growing worse since the 1930's, reached catastrophic proportions. This time, its effects on the deportation policy could not be offset by annexations of foreign territory with untapped sources of supply of forced labor. Such population categories as were still subjected to mass arrests at that time—like the Jews deported in 1950-51—were not ample enough to replenish the declining labor force of the camps.

So the reforms adopted at this stage in order to stabilize the camp population not only could not be abandoned after a short lapse of time but also had to be followed by other, more far-reaching reforms, such as the separation of the political and the common-law prisoners, a massive capital investment in the plants attached to the concentration camps, efforts to raise labor productivity, etc.

In fact, these reforms initiated the whole process of change which, though at first aimed at stabilizing the camp population, eventually resulted in a drastic decrease in the number of prisoners—from several million it was reduced to what most likely is no more than several hundreds of thousands—and in the camps losing the tremendous economic importance which they had assumed from around 1930 until the early 1950's.

Of course, this thoroughgoing transformation of the camp system was not brought about by the population crisis alone. An equally important part was played by other concurrent factors, particularly by the crisis of authority resulting from Stalin's death, by the prisoners' resistance culminating in the strikes and uprisings of 1952-53 and persisting ever since, and by the obvious impossibility of rationalizing the production based on forced labor.

Deportation of entire population groups no longer takes place in the USSR. It is true that most political prisoners are still arrested and sentenced not for a specific deed but rather in the framework of the carefully timed and concerted terror campaigns that from time to time strike specific categories of the population, such as, in recent years, the Ukrainians, the religious believers, and lately the Jews. But these terror campaigns have become selective. Rather than hitting a substantial proportion of the category singled out for repression, the arrests are limited to individuals identified by the secret police as being particularly representative of the category in question.

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The transformation of the camp system has not put an end to extermination, which in fact is one of the vital functions of the concentration camps wherever they exist. But the way in which it is pursued has changed in accordance with the change undergone by all the other functions and by the camps themselves.

The means of crippling and exterminating the convicts which were introduced around 1930 still exist. People in the camps still suffer from the cold because of inadequate shelter and clothing, they are still undernourished, their working conditions are still extremely hard and the medical care appalling.

The normal daily food ration is, theoretically, 2,413 calories on strict regime (which is applied to most political prisoners), and what the prisoner actually gets amounts to some 2,000 calories; in 1937, the daily food ration of a convict doing about the work of an average free worker was theoretically about 2,500 calories and actually some 15 percent less in the Ukhta-Pechora camps, beyond the Arctic circle. Nevertheless, the extent to which the health of the camp inmates is being undermined by undernourishment and malnutrition has undoubtedly decreased due to three other factors:

(1) Though still extremely heavy, the workload imposed on them is much less than it used to be during the 1930's and 1940's;

(2) Some additional food can be purchased in the camp's canteen because the payment of wages to prisoners, eliminated in the 1930's, was restored in the early 1950's, and though only small amounts of money are involved, the additional food makes a considerable difference in this precarious situation;

(3) Because of the drastic decrease in the camp population, the food smuggled into the camps by the free workers who penetrate into the compound (supervisors and foremen who work with the convicts in the plant, truck drivers who bring loads, etc.) now reaches the average prisoner, while in the old days it was all grabbed by the prisoners' "aristocracy"—the criminal gangs, the collaborators of the administration, etc. (See Anatoly Marchenko, *My Testimony*, Pall Mall Press, London, 1969, pp. 235-242).

Therefore, what used to be the means of exterminating the camp inmates has rather become the means of undermining their strength and health, and of crippling them.

### Selective Crippling

These instruments, too, are now often used in a selective way. For instance, a prisoner singled out to be marked for life by his stay in a concentration camp is given the kind of work which will ruin his health for good. Such was the case, among many others, of the writer Yuli Daniel. With his arm crippled by a wound he had suffered during his service in the Soviet army during World War II, he was assigned to the heaviest kind of work in the camp, the lifting of logs and shifting of coal. When he got pains in the shoulder and in the spot where the bone had been shattered, his work mates shifted him to the easiest job that there was within the leaders' gang. But the administration found out and immediately ordered that he do the actual unloading (Marchenko, pp. 376-7).

In addition to this crippling of prisoners, both general and selective, there is actual extermination. All those purely sadistic methods which survived during the 1930's and 1940's as means of punishment have been maintained. What is more, the available evidence shows their field of application has considerably expanded in the post-Stalin camp system. The principal vehicles of this expansion have been the provisions according to which prisoners are to be punished by being transferred to special regime camps and jails. The conditions prevailing in these two institutions have been described in previous installments of this serial (AFL-CIO Free Trade Union News, February and April 1970).

To sum up. The crippling of prisoners in the concentration camps is as systematic as ever. As to the extermination properly so called, from blind as it was in the 1920's and systematic as it was during the following two decades, it has become selective. This, unfortunately, is a far cry from the liberalization about which we hear so much from so many Western newspapermen and experts.

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AFL-CIO FREE TRADE UNION NEWS  
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# Role of Forced Labor in Soviet Economy

By PAUL BARTON

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IT was not the Soviet regime that invented the exploitation of prisoners for economic purposes. The practice was widespread in Russia—and indeed in many other countries—long before the 1917 revolution. Many of the spectacular achievements for which Peter the Great is praised by the historians were due to ruthless exploitation of convicts.

Nevertheless, the historic importance of the Soviet contribution in this field cannot be denied. First of all, there is no other example of forced labor assuming an important role in a relatively developed economy over a period of 50 years. Nor is there any other example in modern history of forced labor becoming one of the main pillars of the whole national economy as it did at one time in the USSR. Finally, the remarkable continuity in exploiting the convicts has been complemented by the Soviet government's unique flexibility in adapting the forms and the extent of this exploitation to the changing situation of the economy and of the country.

Without going into the minor changes which Soviet forced labor has steadily been undergoing during the 50 years of its existence, one can divide its history into three distinct periods of unequal duration.

## In Early Period

The first period started with the reform of the penal system that followed the 1917 revolution. The reform was based on the principle that economically useful work is the best way of correcting and re-educating delinquents. Though in this respect the principle did not produce the expected results, it has been upheld until this day, having gradually become a mere propaganda device to justify the economic exploitation of prisoners.

Naturally, during the first period, which lasted some 10 years, the continuation of forced labor to Soviet economy was in no way comparable with what it was to become eventually, especially during the 1930's and 1940's. For one, the degree of exploitation was not the same since prison labor was mainly imposed upon common-law convicts who throughout Soviet history were much better treated than the "politicals." And then, the overall number of prison inmates was limited—the millions of slaves which were to flood the prison camps during the second period were not yet available.

Still, the contribution of forced labor to the national economy in the 1920's should not be dismissed as negligible, especially when we know that on the eve of World War I, when prisoners' work did play an important economic role, less than 30,000 people were serving a forced labor sentence in Russia; the number of convicts put to work during the first decade of the Soviet regime was much higher.

It was not the prisons for common-law convicts but the concentration camps for political prisoners that became by far the most important vehicle of the spread of forced labor during the second period, inaugurated around 1930, at the time of Stalin's industrialization drive.

The transition from the first to the second period was marked by a drastic increase not only in the degree of exploitation of prisoners but also in their number which jumped, within a few years, from several tens of thousands to several millions. Simultaneously, the forced labor camps spread over the whole Soviet territory, especially over its remote and underpopulated areas. Most of them consisted in fact of a whole cluster of camps which often covered a vast territory.

In principle, each cluster of camps was entrusted with a particular economic activity: gold mines in Kolyma, coal mines in Vorkuta and Karaganda, coal mines, sawmills and oil fields in Uktizh, construction of the Baikal-Amur railroad in the camps known as Bamlag, etc. However, these were merely the prevailing activities of each unit. For instance, in the coal-mining Vorkuta Camp, actual mining does not seem to have ever occupied more than 25 to 30 percent of the inmates, a considerable number being set aside for building sites, while others were used for internal service in the camps and still others were unfit for any work.

Attempts have been made by economists in the West to determine the distribution of forced labor among industries and the share of forced labor in the Soviet economy, mainly on the basis of the Soviet economic plan for 1941 (captured by the German army in the Soviet Union and then by the American army in Germany) which contains a number of data on the economic activities of the

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this analysis can have no more than a roughly indicative value; with this qualification, they are undoubtedly useful.

### Sizable Share

For example, of all the centrally financed capital investments, as earmarked for the entire Soviet economy (inclusive of transport, defense and navy), some 14 percent were planned for the Ministry of Interior. The share of the construction to be carried out by the Ministry of Interior on its own account in the overall construction was to amount to some 17 percent; moreover, this ministry was a big contractor of construction work for other ministries. The share of the ministry in the production of timber was to be 12 percent in the whole USSR, 26 percent in the Arkhangelsk district and over 50 percent in the Komi Republic (see Naum Jasny, "Labor and Output in Soviet Concentration Camps," Journal of Political Economy, October 1951).

The ministry's part in the Soviet chromite-ore mining was set at over 40 percent. Practically the entire gold-mining was entrusted to the camps. The industrial output planned for the Ministry of Labor was almost equal to that of the big economic ministries: it was to amount to 1,969 million rubles, while for example the output of the Ministry of Non-Ferrous Metals was to be 2,129 million. Out of the total cargo of 90.7 thousand tons to be carried by the arctic maritime route, 22.5 thousand (almost 25 percent) were set aside for the camps of Kolyma alone.

However, the main economic function of forced labor camps consists in their outstanding role in the colonization of remote and more or less unexploited regions. Already in 1936 the control of all the programs of migration and colonization was transferred from the Ministry of Agriculture to the Ministry of Interior. The achievements of forced labor in this field are spectacular. The best known example is the development through forced labor of the vast territory in the extreme northeast of the USSR known under the name of Kolyma Camps.

Another example is the city of Norilsk in the northeast of the Siberian plain, entirely built by forced labor. Founded during the Second Five-Year Plan to exploit the local deposits of nickel (the richest of the entire country), Norilsk had 30,000 inhabitants at the end of World War II and some 300,000 to 400,000 in 1953. Still another example can be found in the Komi Republic, in the far north of European Russia, with the main administration center in Vorkuta. Colonization through forced labor started in the 1930's. Oil fields developed in this region became a vital source of petroleum during World War II. The coal production in this region, which started in 1940, amounted to 14,153 million tons in 1955.

The second period, during which the part of forced labor in national economy had reached its peak, came to an end after approximately two decades, when the sources of the continuous massive supply of convicts dried out towards 1950. The ensuing shortage of manpower began to put the economic enterprises of the camp system into an increasingly precarious situation.

Some serious attempts were made at that stage to save scarce labor through increased capital investment. Theoretically, this should have helped to solve the problem. But the equation did not work. Increased capital investment also meant increased production cost. Instead of the destruction of forced laborers, who until then could be replaced at little cost, through more arrests and deportations, there was now the wear and tear of expensive machines with its unavoidable incidence on the unit costs. And the eternal truth that only the most rudimentary tools can be entrusted to slaves made itself felt once again. The wear and tear of the labor-saving equipment turned out to be enormous.

Therefore the next step was to try to rationalize the utilization of the prisoners and to stimulate their productivity. The main result was a growing pressure to reduce the number of prisoners still further: on the one hand, it was important to get rid of those who were exhausted, ill or crippled; on the other hand, the possibility of getting one's sentence reduced was the only real incentive for increased output. So the measures dictated by the shortage of labor led to other measures which kept aggravating the shortage itself. Yet the expected benefits failed to materialize. The reasons were quite simple:

(a) Whatever its modalities, forced labor is slavery; the prisoners work accordingly.

(b) The camp enterprises could not possibly get the kind of manpower they needed. Their workers could not be recruited according to the skills and work experience required but according to the police state's need.

(c) Because of their location, the kind of materials they were using, etc., a great many enterprises built by the camps could be profitable only on condition that a very high price in human life continued to be paid.

Therefore, the efforts made around 1951-1954 to stimulate the prisoners' output were pursued no further in the following years. Some important measures adopted to this effect were actually dropped in the late 1950's. That is, for instance, what happened to the transfer of the camp enterprises from police jurisdiction to the jurisdiction of economic ministries. At present the police is once more the prisoners' only master and the crisis of the tremendous economic empire built up by the concentration camp inmates in the most inhospitable regions of the country goes on.

However, this was not to be the camp administration's last word. Simultaneously with the decrease in the number of prisoners and with the failure of the attempts to rationalize forced labor, the manner in which the convicts were exploited began to change. As reported in a previous instalment of this serial (Free Trade Union News, May 1970), the following new features could be observed in recent years:

(a) In such huge camp agglomerations as were threatened by riots and revolts, the "politicals" were replaced by common-law convicts to ensure the continuity of work.

(b) The tendency to concentrate the prisoners in thinly populated areas, which were thus becoming a kind of prisoners' reserves, has to some extent been replaced by the opposite tendency to spread the camps more evenly over the Soviet territory. This not only reduces the danger of major revolts but also makes it possible to use forced labor in a greater variety of economic pursuits.

(c) There has been a growing emphasis on the easy transferability of forced labor. Accordingly, the work of camp inmates seems to have been increasingly supplemented by other forms of forced labor, such as deportation and banishment, "corrective labor without deprivation of liberty," forced labor imposed upon convicts released on parole, etc.

These new trends are not only due to the crisis of the camp system built by Stalin, they also represent an important adjustment of forced labor to the present needs and difficulties of Soviet economy. One of the most unmanageable problems is indeed the acute shortage of manpower in certain areas and in certain industrial sectors, accompanied by unemployment in others. It is therefore vitally important to have a mass of easily transferable labor.

In this way, despite the crisis, forced labor continues to play an important part in Soviet economy. And it is a much more important part than prior to the 1917 revolution: nearly 30,000 convicts slaved under the last Tsar; they are now several hundreds of thousands.

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April 1971

OTHER THOUGHTS ON THE POW QUESTION

The government of North Vietnam attempts to project the image of David confronting Goliath, but without David's aggressiveness in going out to meet the Philistine champion halfway to give battle. Obviously the image-projection is a gambit designed to present the North Vietnamese as a brave, simple and, above all, totally blameless people engaged in the defense of their homeland against a technological monster. This image is crucial to the all-important political side of the war they are waging.

Those who are predisposed to take the North Vietnamese at their word have little difficulty in maintaining their belief in the justice of North Vietnam's cause because Hanoi has never officially deviated from this fiction of nonintervention which is vital to the myth surrounding their refusal to admit that the Geneva Conventions (which they must admit to having signed) do apply to their American prisoners. According to Hanoi's plot, U.S. air strikes against the north are simply an unprovoked act of banditry and the U.S. airmen (and other military and civilian personnel) who fall into their hands are criminals. Since they are criminals, by North Vietnamese fiat, they do not fall under the protective provisions of the Geneva Conventions. Hanoi applies a similar standard to Allied personnel who fall into the hands of other Communist forces fighting in Southeast Asia using the flimsy pretext that the Viet Cong is an entity unto itself in South Vietnam, as are the Pathet Lao in Laos and the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. Hence, according to Hanoi, any prisoners taken by these "indigenous patriots" are the problems of their local commands. This mosaic of deceit in three countries in Southeast Asia where Hanoi has deployed thousands of her own troops makes Allied efforts to help or retrieve Allied prisoners doubly difficult, for there is no one, no place, to which an appeal can be made.

Had Hanoi's troops remained at home, then Hanoi's claim to have no knowledge of the whereabouts of Allied prisoners, including many newsmen, captured in Laos and Cambodia as well as South Vietnam might be more plausible. But Hanoi's troops are present in three areas of Indochina in overwhelming force. Their numbers, as the U.S. has been able to piece them out from a variety of sources, were presented in President Nixon's State of the World report on 25 February 1971.

"Since 1965 at least 630,000 North Vietnamese troops have streamed down the (Ho Chi Minh) Trail. They have brought with them more than 400,000 weapons, over 100 million pounds of ammunition, and at least 200 million pounds of food." These figures exclude the number of "patriotic individuals" and weapons landed on coastal beaches and through the Port of Sihanoukville. In his report the President went on to say, "Hanoi had made the war an Indochina conflict. In South Vietnam there are some 100,000 North Vietnamese troops. In Laos there are about 90,000. In Cambodia there are over 50,000 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong."

It should be noted that the recent South Vietnamese move against the Ho Chi Minh Trail in southern Laos met no resistance from Pathet Lao elements, but from massive formations of North Vietnamese.

A revelation regarding the overwhelming presence of the North Vietnamese Army in Indochina came from an impeccable North Vietnamese source in March 1969, Defense Minister General Giap. The West learned about Giap's now famous revelation regarding NVA casualties in the South when a Milan periodical, l'Europeo, featured an interview which Giap had granted to an Italian newspaperwoman named Oriana Fallaci on 27 March 1969. The following excerpt (from a special feature translation, Washington Post, 6 April 1969) begins with her statement to him:

"General, the Americans say you've lost half a million men.

That's quite exact.

He let this drop as casually as if it were quite unimportant, as hurriedly as if, perhaps, the real figures were even larger."

Naturally, the official transcript of the interview published by the North Vietnamese on 7 April 1969 omitted Giap's reply.

The President has accused Hanoi of massive intervention throughout Indochina; Giap's admission of massive losses lends confirmation. Hanoi coordinates and controls all theater activities, and in so doing presumably concentrates most, if not all, prisoners taken beyond its borders safely within North Vietnam where they remain as unlisted, dehumanized bargaining counters, denied all international rights and suffering the cruel and unusual punishment of seemingly endless captivity. So long as Hanoi can officially sustain the fiction of nonintervention in the south and west, it can officially maintain that Hanoi holds captive only U.S. airmen accused of attacking the north.

There is little awareness of the fact that there are approximately 9,000 North Vietnamese POW's held by the South Vietnamese, concentrated primarily on the South Vietnamese island of Phu Quoc, off the Cambodian coast. These prisoners live in wood and tin barracks, neatly aligned in a Spartan military manner. Raw and bleak as these compounds seem, they are open to regular inspection by teams from the International Red Cross with access to all of the prisoners, even for private sessions if the team wishes. These POW's are not cut off from all contact with the world and their homeland. Their peculiar doom is their own government's disinterest in their fate.

EXTRACTED FROM

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY FOR THE 70'S  
A REPORT TO THE CONGRESS

BY PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON, 25 FEBRUARY 1971

PRISONERS OF WAR

We have the deepest concern for the plight of our prisoners of war in Indochina. Some 1600 Americans, including pilots and soldiers and some 40 civilians, are missing or held in North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Some have been held as long as six years, longer than any other prisoners of war in our history.

The enemy violates specific requirements of the Geneva Prisoners of War Convention, by which they are bound. They violate common standards of decency as well.

They have not permitted impartial inspection of prison camps despite constant attempts to arrange such visits. They have refused to repatriate seriously sick and wounded prisoners. They have failed to identify all prisoners and to allow many of them to correspond with their families.

We and the South Vietnamese have made intensive efforts in the past year to secure better treatment and the release of allied prisoners -- through global diplomacy, through proposals in Paris, and through the courageous raid at Son Tay. Congressional expressions have been valuable in underlining American public concern. The world increasingly condemned the other side's practices, and the UN General Assembly passed a resolution this fall which underscored the international obligation to treat prisoners humanely.

I repeat my October 7 proposal for the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of war held by both sides. All prisoners, journalists, and other civilian captives should be released now to return to the place of their choice. Such action would not only meet humanitarian concerns; it might also lead to progress on other aspects of a peace settlement.

As first steps, the Republic of Vietnam, with our support, has offered to repatriate all sick and wounded prisoners of war. It has unilaterally returned groups of such prisoners, despite North Vietnam's refusal to make orderly arrangements for their repatriation. And it has proposed the release of all North Vietnamese prisoners of war in return for all U.S. and allied prisoners in Indochina and any South Vietnamese

prisoners held outside South Vietnam. We profoundly regret the other side's refusal to respond to these initiatives.

The treatment of prisoners of war anywhere is not a political or military issue, but a matter of simple humanity. As I said on October 7:

"War and imprisonment should be over for all these prisoners. They and their families have already suffered too much."

This Government will continue to take all possible measures to secure the end of imprisonment as well as the end of the war.

No discussion of Vietnam would be complete without paying tribute to the brave Americans who have served there. Many have sacrificed years of their lives. Others have sacrificed life itself.

These Americans have fought in a war which differed from our previous experience. We have not sought a traditional military victory. The complex nature of this conflict posed unprecedented difficulties for those involved.

It is to their lasting credit that Americans in Vietnam have overcome these difficulties and conducted themselves in our best tradition.

CPYRGHT

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION JOURNAL  
January 1971

## Release and Repatriation of Vietnam Prisoners

by Charles W. Havens III

A number of questions involving international law have arisen as a result of the Vietnam conflict. In spite of growing public interest in the release and repatriation of prisoners of war, there has been little, if any, legal analysis of the obligations of the combatants to release and repatriate the other side's soldiers captured during the conflict and held as prisoners.

CPYRGHT

ARTICLE 4 of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War<sup>1</sup> sets forth the standards for classifying captives as prisoners of war. This article provides in part that prisoners of war are persons who are members of the armed forces of a party to the conflict. All captured American servicemen, including the pilots and aircrewmen detained by North Vietnam, were uniformed members of the armed forces of a party to the conflict and are prisoners of war clearly within the provisions of this article.

The United States and the government of Vietnam have accorded prisoner of war status on North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces even beyond that required by the convention. The right of these captives on both sides to be accorded prisoner of war status should be above question.

There are now more than 1,500 American servicemen who are legally considered "missing" in Southeast Asia and who may be in the hands of North Vietnam or its Pathet Lao and Viet Cong allies. Approximately 460 of these Americans are listed by the Department of Defense as "captured", but since the other side has not provided a list acknowledging all the men who are captured, the total number of men who may be prisoners of war at this date is still not known. Previously, the other

side has stated that the total number of prisoners is a military secret which would not be revealed. From time to time we have learned from various sources that men previously known only to be missing were captured. This fact, when coupled with the large number who are known only to be missing, has led many to conclude that the actual number of men captured is significantly higher than the number now listed as "captured". Unfortunately, too, some of the men now believed on the basis of the best available evidence to have been captured probably did not survive. It is hoped the number of families which will receive this crushing news will be small.

Also, there are members of the Free World Military Assistance Forces and the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam who are in a missing status and may be in the hands of the enemy. Here, however, the basic information is not as readily available.

On the other side of the fence, there are now more than 33,000 Viet Cong and North Vietnamese soldiers held in six prisoner of war camps operated by the Army of the Republic of Vietnam. Each of these has been classified as a prisoner of war. Approximately 7,000 of these prisoners of war are North Vietnamese, and the remaining number are either Viet Cong from South Vietnam or regrouped south Vietnamese who elected in 1954 to go north, later returned to the South and took up arms with the Viet Cong.

The first American pilot known to have been captured by North Vietnam is Lt. Everett Alvarez. He was shot down and captured on August 5, 1964. The best available evidence today suggests that he is still a prisoner. Last August, Lt. Alvarez had been a prisoner for 19 years, an unprecedented duration for

any American serviceman. The fact that Lt. Alvarez's fate is shared to almost as great an extent by hundreds of other men, many of whom are known to be sick or injured, without any prospect of release in sight, dramatizes the need to effect the repatriation of all captured servicemen in Southeast Asia.

The fate of the more than 33,000 servicemen of the other side who are prisoners of war in South Vietnam is important to them, their families and a resolution of the conflict in Vietnam. Although these latter prisoners are receiving food and treatment generally in accordance with the requirements of the Geneva Convention, years of captivity with attendant separation from family and banishment from society are not productive humanitarian goals. Rather, their imprisonment serves only to delay an ultimate settlement and their assimilation into society.

All parties to the conflict have an easily identifiable interest in the prompt release and repatriation of the prisoners of war. All persons interested in seeing the realization of the humanitarian aims of the Geneva Convention should have an equally strong interest in the realization of this same goal. How do we get there from here?

### Recent Conflicts Give Historical Lessons

At best, the lessons of the more recent international conflicts can serve only as guide posts or danger signs to us in seeking to resolve questions of release and repatriation in the Vietnam conflict. Vietnam is not the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, nor is Vietnam the

1. Unless otherwise noted, all references to the Geneva Convention are to the Third Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of August 12, 1949.

Korean War of 1950-1953. Vietnam today is not even the French-Indochina war which supposedly was resolved by the 1954 Geneva agreement. Still, each of these historical conflicts has something of value for our examination.

The Arab-Israeli War shows us a relatively good lesson of prompt wholesale repatriation of prisoners of war soon after the formal cessation of continuous hostilities. The fact that Israel promptly repatriated far greater numbers of Arab prisoners than the Arab's side is a good expression of the proper humanitarian intent which should motivate any repatriation. Repatriation is not a "trade", or "barter", or "exchange" in the language of the tradesmen. It is a plain and simple requirement that all parties to a conflict permit all their prisoners of war to return home.

The 1954 Agreement at the conclusion of the French-Indochina War shows us that even a sound agreement requires good faith performance before the results are satisfactory. Article 21 provided:

(a) All prisoners of war and civilian internees of Vietnam, French, and other nationalities captured since the beginning of hostilities in Vietnam during military operations or in any other circumstances of war and in any part of the territory of Vietnam shall be liberated within a period of thirty (30) days after the date when the cease-fire becomes effective in each theater.

(b) The term "civilian internees" is understood to mean all persons who, having in any way contributed to the political and armed struggle between the two parties, have been arrested for that reason and have been kept in detention by either party during the period of hostilities.

(c) All prisoners of war and civilian internees held by either party shall be surrendered to the appropriate authorities of the other party, who shall give them all possible assistance in proceeding to their country of origin, place of habitual residence, or the zone of their choice.

Since this agreement called for the surrendering of prisoners in the first

instance to "the other party", presumably it made no provision for instances wherein a prisoner did not want to return to the control of his own forces. In practice, significant numbers of prisoners of war were released by both sides within the prescribed thirty-day period or shortly after. Nevertheless, there were charges and countercharges that thousands of prisoners of war had not been released. The International Control Commission was ineffective in obtaining additional releases from North Vietnam. Thus, the agreement for release was sound, but its execution left something to be desired because of the significant number of prisoners who did not return and for whom there was no satisfactory accounting.

The 1962 Protocol to the Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos dealt with the release of captured personnel in a clear, uncomplicated manner. It simply provided in Article 7 that:

All foreign military persons and civilians captured or interned during the course of hostilities in Laos shall be released within thirty days after the entry into force of this Protocol and handed over by the Royal Government of Laos to the representatives of the Governments of the countries of which they are nationals in order that they may proceed to the destination of their choice.

Again, execution was less than completely satisfactory.

In Korea, the release and repatriation of prisoners of war was the single most controversial aspect of the negotiations and certainly the agenda item which required the longest time to resolve. Some might say that it was never resolved in view of the large number of Americans who were not satisfactorily accounted for and who were much later classified as "died while captured" or "died while missing". In July, 1951, the Korean armistice negotiations began, and although the fighting continued, there was no major ground offensive. By the end of May, 1952, substantial agreement had been reached on all but one major point of negotiation—repatriation of

prisoners of war. In this regard, the difficulty lay in resolving the question of "voluntary" repatriation. In short, would there be forced repatriation of unwilling prisoners? After many months of stalemate, the issue was finally resolved. There was no forced repatriation of prisoners. But in the meantime, all prisoners on both sides suffered the pains of captivity for many more months, and, indeed, many died during this period of internment.

North Vietnam adhered to the Geneva Convention on June 28, 1957. The United States ratified it on August 2, 1955, and it came into force six months later. The government of Vietnam acceded in 1953. The International Committee of the Red Cross (I.C.R.C.) in 1965 declared that the Geneva Conventions are fully in force in the Vietnam conflict and that all parties are bound to adhere to their terms. North Vietnam has stated that it does not consider the convention applicable to Americans because the pilots and aircrew held by it are criminals, or "air pirates", subject to the laws of North Vietnam and not prisoners of war. The relevant article of the convention dealing with classification of captives is Article 4. As previously mentioned, American servicemen held by North Vietnam clearly qualify as prisoners of war under this article and are entitled to treatment in accordance with the precepts of the convention. North Vietnam's contention that the convention is not applicable because there has been no declaration of war is not recognized by the I.C.R.C. or, to my knowledge, by any other non-Communist bloc nation. As a legal argument, it is simply not taken seriously. Article 2 of the convention states that it is applicable "to all cases of declared war or of any other armed conflict which may arise between two or more of the parties to the Convention, even if the state of war is not recognized by one of them". As the I.C.R.C. has declared, the Vietnam war is clearly an armed conflict of an international character in which the full

convention is applicable. The existence of this international conflict has been recognized by the United States and the XXIst Conference of the International Red Cross. Although it claims that the convention does not apply to its captives, North Vietnam has maintained consistently, even in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that it treats the captured servicemen humanely.

#### **Due Process Guarantees Not Observed**

Any contention by North Vietnam that its reservation to Article 85 of the convention permits it to deny prisoner of war status to captured American servicemen is also without merit. Article 85 provides that "prisoners of war prosecuted under the laws of the Detaining Power for acts committed prior to capture shall retain, even if convicted, the benefits of the present Convention". Initially, the clause presupposes prisoner of war status, which North Vietnam has denied. Secondly, there have been no convictions that, in any event, require certain due process guarantees which North Vietnam there are no known grounds for any such convictions. The bombing policy for North Vietnam observed to an unprecedented degree the laws of war. The targets were military supporting facilities, and the operating instructions were strictly drawn to minimize collateral damage and injury to the civilian populace. In fact, in pursuing such a restricted air war, the pilots were incurring greater risks to their own safety. In short, there has been no verification of North Vietnam's charges that the Americans are war criminals.

The Viet Cong does not claim that the soldiers captured by its forces are other than prisoners of war, but it maintains that it is not a party to the convention. The I.C.R.C. considers the Viet Cong bound by the adherence of both North and South Vietnam.

The United States, the Republic of Vietnam, the Republic of Korea, Australia, T

Zealand have acknowledged the applicability of the convention and assured the I.C.R.C. of their intention to honor it.<sup>3</sup>

In South Vietnam, prisoners of war, whether Viet Cong or North Vietnamese, are turned over to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam for internment in six prisoners of war camps. This procedure is sanctioned by Article 12 of the convention because South Vietnam is a party to the convention and is willing and able to apply the convention. South Vietnam also permits the I.C.R.C. to inspect regularly the camps where these prisoners are held.

#### **United States Bears Special Concern**

As mentioned previously, both North Vietnam and the Viet Cong hold prisoners. Therefore, the critical parties concerned with the actual release or repatriation of prisoners are South Vietnam, North Vietnam, and the Viet Cong.<sup>4</sup> Of course, in terms of humanitarian interest as well as governmental and public preoccupation, the United States bears a special concern.

If we look to the convention as the principal authority, Article 118 states simply that "Prisoners of war shall be released and repatriated without delay after the cessation of active hostilities." It provides that this should be done with or in the absence of any agreement. Article 118 also deals with the costs of repatriation.

Article 119 and Articles 46-48, which it references, deal primarily with the obligations of a party to see that repatriation is effected in a manner that is in the best interests of the prisoners of war, e.g., the captor must provide sufficient food and water to maintain their health, provide proper care of sick and wounded and return designated personal items. The last three paragraphs of Article 119, however, provide for the retention of prisoners of war against whom criminal proceedings for indictable offenses are pending, or whose punishment for these offenses has not been completed.

The preceding articles dealt with repatriation at the close of hostilities. Articles 109 through 117 cover direct repatriation and accommodation in neutral countries even when the hostilities may very well be continuing at an active pace between the belligerents. These articles could apply to the Vietnam conflict now, and to what many believe will be the prevailing situation for the foreseeable future.

Article 109 requires a party to return to their own country all willing "seriously wounded and seriously sick prisoners of war after having cared for them until they are fit to travel". The succeeding article provides further definition of these categories of sick and wounded who are entitled to direct repatriation: "(1) Incurably wounded and sick, whose mental or physical fitness seems to have been gravely diminished. (2) Wounded and sick who, according to medical opinion, are not likely to recover within one year, whose condition requires treatment and whose mental or physical fitness seems to have been gravely diminished. (3) Wounded and sick who have recovered, but whose mental or physical fitness seems to have been gravely and permanently diminished."

Article 110 also provides that the following may be accommodated in a neutral country: "(1) Wounded and sick whose recovery may be expected within one year of the date of the wound or the beginning of the illness, if treatment in a neutral country might increase the prospects of a more certain and speedy recovery. (2) Prisoners of war whose mental or physical health, according to medical opinion, is seriously threatened by continued captivity, but whose accommodation in a neutral country might remove such a threat."

2. See Articles 85 and 105.

3. See Joint Manila Communiqué, October 24, 1966.

4. Prisoners held in Laos by the Pathet Lao forces may be subject to control by the more than 40,000 North Vietnamese forces there. To the extent that they are not, the Pathet Lao forces might be held bound by the Geneva Convention by Laos's adherence to it. In any event, those North Vietnamese forces held as prisoners by the Royal Lao Army are now acknowledged as falling within the convention's protection.

If the parties do not agree on a method for determining which prisoners qualify for direct repatriation or accommodation in a neutral country, Article 110 provides that the principles enunciated in the Convention's Model Agreement and Regulations Concerning Mixed Medical Commissions shall be applied.

The provisions of the convention relating to direct repatriation at the close of hostilities and those covering repatriation or internment in a neutral country of certain sick or wounded prisoners of war are straightforward and clear. If the war is over, prisoners of war should be given the opportunity to return to their home country. During the war, the seriously sick or wounded who are willing should be repatriated directly or interned in a neutral country for the duration of the hostilities.

The convention does not establish equally detailed principles and procedures for the general release or repatriation of healthy prisoners of war while the hostilities continue. Article 109 does state that the parties to a conflict may conclude by agreements for direct repatriation or internment in a neutral country "of able bodied prisoners of war who have undergone a long period of captivity". This provision does not seem necessary because the parties could repatriate all prisoners at any time with or without an agreement to that effect. The result in any event clearly would be in keeping with the humanitarian purposes which the convention was designed to effect.

Apparently, however, it was beyond the realm of the realistic to include within the coverage of the convention requirements whereunder the combatants were expected to release able-bodied soldiers during the course of hostilities. Yet we have Article 117, which declares flatly that "no repatriated person may be employed on active military service". The scholars have suggested that this applies only to prisoners of war repatriated because they are sick, wounded or long-time prisoners of war who might return to battle their former captors. The United States, however, as a matter of policy does not return former prisoners of war who have been released to combat against their previous captors.

#### **Obligation To Release Prisoners After Eighteen Months**

Assuming that the present state of hostilities in Vietnam continues indefinitely, what obligation does the convention place on the parties to release or repatriate prisoners of war? Literally read, the convention might lead to the conclusion that the only obligations would be for those who qualify as sick or wounded. Yet the convention's anticipation that the duration of some hostilities might warrant the repatriation or internment in a neutral country of "long-time" prisoners of war, permits me to conclude that the very basic humanitarian principles which underlie the entire convention require that prisoners of war not be kept interned indefinitely.

When there is no end of hostilities in sight, all prisoners of war who have

remained in captivity longer than eighteen months should be repatriated by the captor so long as the other party agrees to honor the requirement of Article 117. There are now thousands of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong and hundreds of American prisoners of war who have been interned for more than two years, and there is no end of their captivity in sight.

To achieve fully its purpose, the Geneva Convention should provide a solution for this situation. It is reasonable to conclude that eighteen months of captivity with no likelihood of release in sight is sufficient to require accommodation in a neutral country under Article 110 and the model agreement. Indeed, the evidence that we have concerning the Americans held in North Vietnam and those held by the Viet Cong in South Vietnam would support a finding that many of them are seriously sick or wounded and entitled to direct repatriation under Article 110. The fact that the other side does not permit impartial inspection of its prisoner of war camps, when added to the information we have, e.g., significant weight losses, intestinal and skin diseases, use of crutches years after capture and confinement in isolation, provides a sufficient basis for a presumption that the American prisoners of war should be repatriated or at least interned in a neutral country immediately. To conclude otherwise, would constitute a gross step backward in the evolution of basic principles of humanitarian law.

# With Propaganda, At Least, Hanoi Reacts on POWs

## North Vietnamese Deliver A Holiday TV 'Special'; Both Sides Stay Adamant

By Wesley Pruden, Jr.

Like pawns in an unending chess game, the American prisoners of war were moved to new squares last week.

Items:

✓ Timed to exploit the holiday season, North Vietnam invited a Canadian television correspondent to talk to and film several U.S. prisoners in a carefully tended, scrubbed-up compound in Hanoi. The filmed interviews were shown to American television viewers.

The U.S. Defense Department dismissed the gesture with contempt. After first saying there would be no comment, a department spokesman in Washington called the gesture "one more example of the refusal of North Vietnam to conduct itself as a civilized signatory of the Geneva Convention."

✓ The next day, Radio Hanoi broadcast a Christmas program from an unidentified prisoner-of-war camp, featuring carols and conversations with prisoners who promised their families they would be home soon. Static erased some of the words, but not before a man identified as Bui Van Thu, a minister of the Vietnam Evangelical Church, preached a Christmas sermon about the peace of Christ, the love of God.

✓ In Hanoi, Pham Van Dong, the premier of North Vietnam, reacted sharply—and defensively—to suggestions that prisoners were badly treated in his camps. Said he: "I swear to you that these men are being well treated."

These chess moves, diplomatic sources in Washington were quick to say, might be best read as efforts to score propaganda points, perhaps only to even the score. Since late summer, when President Nixon dispatched astronaut Frank Borman on a 12-nation trip to build diplomatic pressure in behalf of the prisoners, this issue has evolved as the sticking point in the negotiations between the United States and North Vietnam.

**Adamant Positions**

Says one foreign diplomat in Washington: "The prisoners might be the big

ger for real negotiating. If it could be re-

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The official positions of the two governments seem, so far as their public postures go, to be clear, adamant, and irreconcilable. The United States wants to talk about prisoners as a separate issue, divorced from other questions in the negotiations. Hanoi insists that it won't talk about the POWs until all U.S. troops are withdrawn from South Vietnam.

Nevertheless, bits and pieces of evidence clearly suggest that the Communists are treating the issue, as well as the prisoners themselves, with more care than they once did. Hanoi once threatened to put U.S. fliers on trial as war criminals, with death for those judged guilty. But in recent months the Communists have seemed eager to portray themselves as humane captors.

In last week's interview with Michael Maclear of the Canadian Broadcasting Corp., the North Vietnamese premier said the list of prisoners—with 368 names on it—given in late December to two U.S. senators was "full and complete." He reacted angrily when Mr. Maclear reminded him that the United States insists that Hanoi holds prisoners whose names were not on the list.

"The Nixon people are scoundrels, really scoundrels, to talk of this," Pham Van Dong retorted. "It is they who show no humanitarian concern by talking like this. We Vietnamese know all too well what it's like being prisoners—under the French. Yet when they were our prisoners we treated them well. Ask them. Ask the Americans in our camps. I swear to you these men are well treated."

The premier wouldn't allow the correspondent to take him at his literal word; he wouldn't allow him to talk at random with the Americans in his camps. But soon Mr. Maclear was taken to a prison compound in downtown Hanoi for interviews with two prisoners, and a look at five others. He was not allowed to talk to the additional five prisoners.

The interviews were recorded on tape, and later censored by the North Vietnamese. The interviews were authorized by the North Vietnamese Politburo, the policy-making arm of the North Vietnamese Communist Party.

**War Is 'Bad'**

In them, the two Americans said the war was "bad" and ought to end, that the United States ought to withdraw. The two were identified as Cmdr. Robert James Schweitzer, 38, of Lemoore, Calif., and Cmdr. Walter Eugene Wilber, 40, of Columbia Crossroads, Pa.

They answered four questions each. Each question had been submitted first to the government authorities, then to the prisoners. The questions allowed were about their identities, mail privileges, their daily chores and routines, and their feelings about the war in Vietnam.

Commander Schweitzer identified himself and said he had been shot down on his 11th mission over North Vietnam, just outside Haiphong, on Jan. 5, 1968. Commander Wilber said he had been shot down on his 22nd mission in June 1968.

Commander Wilber said he got letters once every two months. "My packages contain candy, various food items, special little snacks like peanuts, and sometimes underwear. Small items, chocolate candies and things we appreciate all the time."

Both men said they send out one letter a month, on a form provided by the camp authorities. Other occasions on which mail was permitted, Commander Wilber explained, are Christmas and Mother's Day.

"If we have a special occasion," he said, "an anniversary, children's birthday, all we've got to do is say we want to send a [radio] message and it's transmitted. I understand these things go through Cuba."

Speaking for both men, Commander Wilber described the daily routine of camp life: "We eat three meals a day and we rise about sunrise, have exercises, get our room cleaned up, and have breakfast. We usually play volleyball or have other sports in the mornings, then have our noon meal. However, in addition there's music and the like, and I'll let Bob continue on."

Commander Schweitzer picked up the narrative: "We observe the Vietnamese siesta in the afternoon. The volleyball court and the basketball facilities are available to us all day. We also have a great deal of literature, notable among which are many books by American authors."

**'A Lovely Film'**

He said the prisoners often see Vietnamese movies: "For instance, we saw the *Folk and Art Ensemble Tour of Europe*, which is a very lovely film." Only recently, he said, the prisoners were treated to a Russian production of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.

He described a visit the prisoners were allowed to make to a Hanoi Roman Catholic Cathedral on Christmas Eve. "We visited the cathedral for midnight mass, which is a very enjoyable and very moving ceremony. The place was tremendously crowded with Vietnamese."

The prisoners discuss the war often, Commander Schweitzer said, "because the war is very close to us here. We are all involved." Commander Wilber said he thought the war must end.

"We've just got to stop this thing. We've got to grip the facts as they lie and stop the war. And of course we must withdraw our troops to stop the war. That's a condition we have to face. Then the Vietnamese can solve their own problems. I'm confident of that. Stop the war. Get our troops out. That's what the big job is."

Said Commander Schweitzer: "I of course agree. As I say, I'm terribly concerned about my country and I feel that the future of our country as well as Vietnam and Indochina cannot be served by the prolongation of this war, whatever the reasons and causes. I don't feel that it's necessary even to rake over the old reason of who was wrong, who was right. It has been proven as far as I'm concerned."

1989/09/02 : CIA-RDP79-01194A000300110001-1

Commander Wilber summed up his

WASHINGTON DAILY NEWS  
27 January 1971

CPYRGHT

opinion: "This war is bad. It's bad. Given our situation or the Vietnamese or Indo-chinese people's situation, we've got to get out and let them solve their own problems. We've got our own problems to solve."

The answers seemed to have been rehearsed; the language was repetitive and occasionally clumsy. The Defense Department said both men had been quoted before; their families discounted their words as accurate measurements of their feelings.

"He looks great on film," Gwen Schweitzer, the commander's wife, said the next day in California. "But that's not my impression of his life. I'm certain it was staged." Commander Wilber's wife, Jeanne, said she didn't know her husband's true feelings. "At least I know he's fine. I couldn't have received a nicer gift." She heard it on their 18th wedding anniversary.

The Defense Department said the camp, which correspondent Maclear placed in downtown Hanoi, surrounded by the thatched huts of the poor, appeared to be a showcase prison camp the GIs call "the Hanoi Hilton." Mr. Maclear said he couldn't tell whether the camp was actually used as prisoners' living quarters, but he concluded that it probably was.

To some people, the significance of it all was that Hanoi wants desperately the rest of the world to believe that it does, in fact, treat its prisoners humanely. It might be a prelude, some diplomatic sources suggest, to real negotiations.

Prisoners were the sticking points in the Korean War, in a different way. The cease-fire talks began in July 1951, and an agreement was signed two years later. The Chinese and North Koreans insisted on talking to all of 60,000 Communist troops who said they wanted to stay in South Korea. More than 6,000 Indian soldiers were posted as guards during these talks.

Finally, beginning in August 1953, the United Nations command returned 70,150 North Korean and 5,640 Chinese troops, and in return received 7,850 South Koreans, 3,597 Americans, 945 British, and 228 Turks. Thirteen Americans elected to stay in Communist hands, and later went to China. Most later returned.

More than 8,000 North Vietnamese are now being held in prisoner-of-war camps in South Vietnam, and recent interviews indicate that perhaps 90 per cent of them don't want to return. Saigon has offered to exchange those who want to go home for American prisoners at a 10-1 rate, but Hanoi so far has not been interested.

The chess game goes on. President Nixon himself last week took note of the slow pace, and the growing quotient of frustration in the lives of the prisoners' families. Said he: "I know there is nothing I can say that would truly comfort you."

## Send POWs to Sweden plan

By Scripps-Howard Newspapers

**PARIS**—Two American women whose husbands are missing in Vietnam have a plan to get all American prisoners out of Vietnamese communist hands.

The women want Hanoi to turn the prisoners over to neutral Sweden and Denmark for detention until the end of the Vietnam war.

Mrs. Bonnye Vohden, wife of Navy Cmdr. Raymond Vohden, and Mrs. Charlotte Lannom, wife of Navy Lt. Richard Lannom, will go to Copenhagen and Stockholm next week to make that proposal to those two governments.

The wives, both from Memphis, Tenn., plan also to go on to Moscow—"if we can get permission, get a visa"—to ask the Soviet Union to use its influence with North Vietnam to get it to agree to the novel plan.

"It would at least assure humane treatment for the American prisoners," said Mrs. Vohden, whose husband is known to have been in North Vietnamese custody nearly six years.

Mrs. Lannom's husband was reported "missing in action" over North Vietnam three years ago. She does not know whether he is dead or in Red hands.

Mrs. Lannom echoed her companion's view that transferring all the estimated 500 to 600 Americans held by the communists to Scandinavian custody would "take them out of the awful, inhumane treatment they're getting now."

"And it would show the world just who the communists hold and who they don't, so that people like us would know where we stand."

The two wives came to Paris this week with the help of the Memphis Junior Chamber of Commerce and The Memphis Press-Scimitar, a Scripps-Howard newspaper.

The Press-Scimitar and the Jaycees gathered a ton of letters from people in Memphis and throughout a six-state area in the mid-South. The letters—an estimated 550,000 of them—are addressed to North Vietnamese leaders and urge them to treat the prisoners humanely or release them.

**State Department Is Skeptical**

# Crosby Seeking to Ransom POWs

Larry Crosby, 76-year-old brother of millionaire crooner Bing Crosby, said yesterday that he is supporting an attempt to ransom U.S. prisoners of war held by North Vietnam.

State Department officials expressed total skepticism about the plan. They said they were approached two years ago by the originator of the idea, John G. Fairfax, who attempted unsuccessfully to obtain tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service for his "Prisoners of War Rescue Mission."

In Los Angeles, Larry Crosby identified Fairfax as a retired San Francisco building contractor, and said Fairfax is now in Vientiane, Laos, where he "got some response" from a man "from Hanoi." State Department officials expressed doubt about that also.

"Bing," Larry Crosby told the Los Angeles Times, is now on a lengthy safari in Africa and "didn't know a damn thing about it" until recently, when Larry asked the singer for some financial support.

"Right now Bing and I are paying the expenses, half-and-half," said Larry. The costs so far, Crosby said, involve sending Fairfax to Vientiane and paying his hotel bills.

U.S. officials said Fairfax has been trying to arouse interest in his plan for about four years. When Fairfax came to the State Department about two years ago, they said, he was wearing a blue uniform and a peaked cap with silver wings, which Fairfax described as the uniform of his rescue mission.

"There is no indication," one U.S. official said, "of any interest in this (Fairfax's) proposal by the other side."

Larry Crosby initially indicated yesterday that the Nixon administration had encouraged the idea. State Department officials immediately denied that.

"Our position is that the release of prisoners of war is a humane question which should be settled on the basis of the Geneva convention" and "not on the basis of ransom," said State Department Press Officer Robert J. McCloskey.

Larry Crosby said he was undeterred. "What can they do about it?" he asked. "They'd look pretty funny if we accomplished something, wouldn't they?"

He said he last talked to Fairfax about five days ago, and "he told me I should start getting a negotiating committee of prominent people together. I've started doing it, but I'm not releasing the names yet."

The Washington Daily News, Friday, March 19, 1971

**LARRY CROSBY**, Bing's brother, said in Beverly Hills that he may have to collect \$1 billion to rebuild North Vietnam after the war in exchange for freeing of U.S. POWs.

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**THE EVENING STAR**  
Washington, D. C., Wednesday, March 17, 1971

## VFW Chief Seeks to 'Buy' a POW

KANSAS CITY (AP) — The commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars says his organization will attempt to buy the release of an American prisoner of war for \$100,000.

The commander, Herbert R. Rainwater, said yesterday he would not try to do business with the Hanoi government but with some individual North Vietnamese interested in making money.

"If the leaders in Hanoi see that we can buy one prisoner through the underground, they might well believe we could buy more and show to the world that their people are vulnerable," Rainwater, of San Bernardino, Calif., said in a statement issued here.

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— THE WASHINGTON POST Saturday, March 20, 1971 —

## Nixon Declares Week Of Concern for POWs

President Nixon yesterday proclaimed next week a special period of observance for the 1,600 Americans missing in action or held prisoner by Communist forces in Southeast Asia.

Mr. Nixon issued the proclamation at a special White House ceremony.

"I call upon all the people of the United States to observe this week in heartfelt prayer, and in ceremonies and activities appropriate to voice deep concern for the prisoners and missing men, to inspire their loved ones with new courage and hope, and to hasten the day when their ordeal may end," the proclamation said.

About a dozen wives of missing American servicemen were present for the ceremony. The proclamation was requested by Congress in a special resolution.

Mr. Nixon told the wives that among all the proclamations he has signed, "there is none that has a deeper meaning" than this one, for a week labeled "National Week of Concern for Americans who are Prisoners of War or Missing in Action."

A reception will be held for the families of the POWs Monday on Capitol Hill as part of the "National Week of Concern."

In New York, the Committee of Liaison with Families of U.S. Prisoners of War said it received 193 more letters—from the prisoners, hand-carried by a delegation of women who returned from Hanoi.

Cora Weiss, an official of the Committee of Liaison, said the 193 letters bring to more than 3,400 the total number of letters from the POWs received by the committee since December 1969.

She said that the letters received yesterday were immediately sent by mail to families of the POWs and that letters from the families to the POWs have been forwarded to North Vietnam.

Earlier, families of the prisoners had denounced Hanoi for a three-month stoppage in the delivery of mail.

Thursday, March 25, 1971 THE WASHINGTON POST

## Borman Asks Release of Allies' POWs

From News Dispatches

Former astronaut Frank Borman recommended yesterday that the United States and South Vietnam release hundreds of North Vietnamese prisoners of war in an effort to prod Hanoi into freeing American POWs or easing their plight.

The retired Air Force colonel, who traveled around the world last fall as President Nixon's emissary on POW matters, testified before a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee.

He said a number of captured North Vietnamese equal to the number of Americans missing or captive, about 1,600, should be released unconditionally. Such a proposal has been introduced in Congress by Rep. Paul Findley (R-Ill.).

Acknowledging that Hanoi would not necessarily reciprocate, Borman said the risk was nevertheless "acceptable," and "emphasize this country's concern and willingness to approach" the issue.

Borman said U.S. insistence on prisoner release as a condition of withdrawing troops from Vietnam would have little effect on the Communists. "In essence the prisoners are now hostages," he said.

April 1971

AUSTRALIA: COMMUNIST DISSIDENCE "DOWN UNDER"

The case of dissidence on the part of the Australian Communist Party (CPA) supports the major anti-Soviet theme of the continuing conflict caused by Soviet efforts to maintain hegemony over world CP's against the expression by many Communists of a desire for autonomy. In the recent past, Perspectives has dealt with Soviet treatment of dissident factions in the French (Garaudy), Italian (the "Il Manifesto" group), Spanish (Carrillo vs. Lister), and Venezuelan (Petkoff) Communist parties. We take this occasion to add to this roster the CPA, outlining its quarrel with the CPSU --- a quarrel which is still unresolved but apparently coming to a head. (The CPSU may prefer to postpone decisive action on the CPA until after the 24th CPSU Congress.)

Suggested themes for exploitation by media assets are (in addition to the above mentioned conflict):

- a. the case of CPA dissidence as another illustration of the fragmentation of the world Communist movement;
- b. the cynicism of the CPSU in its use of various tactics and pressures to eliminate dissidence -- tactics in which cash weighs more heavily than the smoke screen of ideology;
- c. the absolute Soviet intolerance of deviation which they see as a threat to their claimed leadership of the Communist world;
- d. the pervasiveness of dissident sentiments and the universal desire among CP's for autonomy;
- e. the existence of publicly expressed dissidence as the tip of the iceberg;
- f. the refusal of the Soviets to accept the uniquely nationalist (as opposed to the international) program of CP's, as exemplified by the CPA.

We believe Aaron's exposure (in the attached Wiener Tagebuch article) of the Soviet tactic of preparing ideological pronouncements for CP's to issue as if they were their own is newsworthy and deserving of wide play.

~~FOR BACKGROUND USE ONLY~~

April 1971

AUSTRALIA: COMMUNIST DISSIDENCE "DOWN UNDER"

The lack of tolerance in the Soviet Communist Party for other Communist parties (or elements within them) having views differing from its own is well known and has been illustrated in the recent past a number of times; for example in the cases of dissident factions in the French, Austrian, Venezuelan, and Spanish CP's. In the last three cases, the CPSU succeeded in splitting the parties, and in throwing its not inconsiderable support to the faction willing to mouth the Soviet line.

The next victim of this continuing, methodical Soviet campaign to destroy dissident tendencies in free world Communist parties seems to be the Party from "down under," the Australian Communist Party (CPA).

The CPA's first sin was to denounce the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia -- and to continue to denounce it periodically right up to the present. Also, it was one of the few parties refusing to sign the joint communique of the World Communist Conference of June 1969. It has opened the columns of its newspapers and journals to anti-Soviet statements by such prominent dissidents as the French Communist Roger Garaudy and the prominent Czech Communist-in-exile, Jiri Pelikan. Eric Aarons, brother of the National Secretary of the CPA, recently submitted to the Austrian dissident journal, Wiener Tagebuch (Vienna Diáry) an article explaining the CPA's program and criticizing Soviet machinations vis-à-vis the CPA. At its last Congress in March 1970, it outlined an unorthodox program bearing a substantial resemblance to concepts voiced far away, e.g., by Garaudy in France and Petkoff in Venezuela. In effect, it is an elaboration of an Australian, national "road to socialism," anathema to the CPSU. The CPA also added its voice to the chorus of criticism of the Soviet Union expressed at the unique gathering of international Communist dissidents in Paris, 26 November 1970.

In the face of these "provocations," the Soviet international weekly, New Times, of 1 January 1971 strongly attacked the CPA for its defiance of "proletarian internationalism" as conceived by the Soviets, i.e. obedience to the Soviet line. (The article is a follow-up to an earlier article from the Czech Communist Party's main newspaper, Rude Pravo, reprinted in the New Times; articles are attached.) In fact, CPA leaders had simply expressed views common to Communist critics around the world who accuse Soviet-dominated Communism of:

denying democracy and self-rule in the name of proletarian internationalism;

clinging to outmoded and unrealistic social concepts which today's technological societies have long since outgrown; and

assuming a basic right to interfere in the affairs of other parties, a variant of the notorious Brezhnev Doctrine.

The fact that the CPSU uses the widely distributed New Times (Novoye Vremya) which is published in the major languages of the world, to launch its attack on the tiny, relatively unimportant CPA clearly means that its target is not merely the CPA, but the large audience of actual and would-be dissidents throughout the world. It is a warning to such dissidents and even a catalogue of their sins.

For its part, the CPA, significantly, chose the dissident organ of the Austrian Communists, the Wiener Tagebuch, for its criticism, pointing to the tactic the Soviets are likely to use to exterminate CPA dissidence: the sponsoring of the pro-Soviet minority as the CPSU-sanctioned "regular" party, exactly as it did with the Spanish Communist Party (PCE). Aarons pointed out that the minority opposition has begun to publish its own newspaper, just as the orthodox, minority faction of the PCE is doing. (The Wiener Tagebuch article is attached.)

An interesting sidelight of Aarons article is his public exposure of a widely used Soviet propaganda technique. During a visit to Moscow by Aarons, the Soviets pressed him to publish in the CPA press a "major" article which the Soviets themselves would compose. It can be concluded that thousands of articles appearing in local Party newspapers and journals throughout the world as statements of the individual Party were in fact written in Moscow by Soviet propagandists. The monotonous uniformity and ponderous style of so many articles published locally in Communist newspapers evidently derive from their common Soviet origin.

The resolution of the long-standing CPA-CPSU quarrel is yet to come. Whether the majority group can survive an all-out assault by the CPSU or whether it will succumb to the CPSU's superior resources and forego its independent criticism of the CPSU remains to be seen. The CPSU is clearly threatening to split the Party, and if some compromise with the Aarons group is not found, it will undoubtedly attempt to do so. It can, for instance, withdraw its financial support from the Aarons group and increase its support to the pro-Soviet faction, over and above financing its newspaper as it seems to be doing now.

In the interim, the CPA continues to express the secret desires of uncounted Communists of all ranks who wish for freedom from Soviet tutelage but who, for varying reasons, are forced to keep silent.

ASAHI EVENING NEWS, Tokyo  
1 February 1971

CPYRGHT

## World Communist Movement

# New Kind of Split Troubles Moscow

By Dev Murarka  
The Observer Service, London

**MOSCOW**—The world Communist movement has still not recovered from the major schism between the Soviet Union and China which took place at the beginning of the 1960's and shows no signs of healing. But a new kind of split is now threatened in the movement from a curious and unexpected source — the Australian Communist Party.

The party split into pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese sections some years ago. But now it looks as if the pro-Soviet party can no longer be so described and is travelling a path of its own. If a label is required for it, perhaps the nearest is to call it a case of "Dubcekism." By itself the Communist Party of Australia may be of no weight or great significance, but its almost total rejection of the Soviet party ideologically could mean that Moscow will be left without any significant Communist support in the Far East. The New Zealand party long ago switched to Maoism, and the Japanese party's ideological twists and turns have proved to be too complicated for Moscow to fathom.

Still more curious, the ostensible reason for all these ideological fireworks is Czechoslovakia, an episode which has been virtually relegated to the pages of history for all practical purposes, its great impact in 1968 notwithstanding. To judge from Soviet comments it would appear that the Australian Communist Party is now committed to applying some of the Dubcek policies in its own affairs. Though formal ties between the Soviet and Australian parties have not been broken, there is no longer any love lost between the two. Some six months ago the Moscow representative of the Australian party paper Tribune was recalled and has not been replaced. From all accounts the Tribune bureau in Moscow has in fact been closed.

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Moscow's dissatisfaction has

now found vigorous public expression. The basis of criticism is the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of Australia held last summer. At first Moscow remained silent but in September the weekly New Times reprinted an article from the Czech party paper Rude Pravo which attacked the CPA for insisting upon discussing the Czechoslovak question at the Congress in spite of pleas from Prague to the contrary. The Australians were also criticised for leaking a letter sent to them by the Czech party. The article accused the CPA of paying insufficient attention to Australian participation in the Vietnam war while busying itself with problems of democracy in Socialist countries.

For some time no more was heard about it. But at the beginning of this year New Times returned to the fray with a two-page editorial article attacking the CPA's position. The editorial did not merely confine itself to recent history, but traced Australian development for some years back, specifically from the 21st Party Congress held in 1967.

The main charges by the New Times were that the CPA leaders have ceased to criticise China and instead are talking in terms of their interest in the Chinese experiment, particularly the Cultural Revolution; that the Australian delegation at the World Communist conference in 1969 refused to sign the main document and in fact did not even publish it fully in the party press. One leading member of the delegation even went so far as to claim that "deliberate efforts were made to prevent free and comradely discussion" at the meeting, said the New Times.

### Russians' Worry

But what hurt the Russians most was that the main document adopted by the 22nd Congress of the CPA even denied the title of "Socialist" (Communist) countries and merely called them "Socialist-based."

Ideologically, the Australian "crimes" are the opening of the party to diverse leftist elements of a non-Communist character and the rejection of the notion of monolithic control of the Party and the principle of democratic centralism, the two cornerstones of Communist ideology. Besides, Moscow is also extremely disapproving of the CPA's call for a new "coalition of the Left" which would include, according to the vague formulation of the CPA documents, almost anybody and everybody. This is unforgivable in Moscow's view because it will erase the distinction between the Communist Party and its coalition partners.

Moscow complains that eight leaders of the old party who spoke up against the new program were dropped from the leadership. As seen by Moscow, the Australian party is virtually controlled now by brothers Laurie and Eric Aarons and Bernard Taft. Above all, Moscow is alarmed at the opening of the party doors to Trotskyists, one of whom, D. Freney, has been taken on to the editorial board of Tribune.

Faint hints have also been dropped that if the Australian party does not see its way to returning to a more orthodox path a new party might be formed which would be more sympathetic to the Soviet viewpoint. The leader of the militant Australian building workers' union, Pat Clancy, has been mentioned as a possibility because he resigned from the CPA's national committee in disagreement with the new party policy.

The problem of relations with the Australian Communist Party is now becoming the more acute for Moscow in

view of the approaching 24th Congress of the Soviet Party, due to begin at the end of March. Clearly, the party leaders would not like to provide a platform for an Aus-

tralian party. But unless a new party is formed before the Congress the existing Party will have to be invited for the sake of party form. The fact that Moscow has chosen to voice its dissatisfaction with the Australian party in the pages of New Times, which has an international audience, is also significant.

### Moscow's Message

Through New Times Australian Communists as well as others interested in the problem, will be able to read Moscow's message.

Moscow cannot be entirely happy at the new faction being formed at its behest because it sets up bad precedents. In the past the Russians have attacked the Chinese for encouraging similar factional splits. But the Australian party seems to have gone so far in the direction of what is here termed right-wing revisionism that there is little choice left for the Soviet party.

The fact of the situation appears to be that, like all small political parties with no prospect of power or influence even in the distant future, the Australian party is beset with problems. Even the old party members are subject to enormous psychological pressures. Rupert Lockwood, formerly a Tribune correspondent in Moscow, argued vigorously in 1967 against an article in his paper which criticised shortcomings of Soviet democracy. Yet, upon his return to Australia, Mr. Lockwood left the party precisely because he found it too pro-Soviet, although the party was already moving away from any identity with Moscow.

The case of the Australian party demonstrates the stress and strains through which the whole of the Communist movement is passing at the moment. For Moscow, the really serious worry is that there appears to be no sign of improvement, although it maintains a public posture that nothing is seriously wrong.

THE WASHINGTON POST  
14 March 1971

# Australian Communists Oppose Moscow

By Dusko Doder  
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Soviet Union is engaged in a sharp public dispute over basic liberties with the tiny Australian Communist Party which continues its criticism of Kremlin policies. A leading Australian Communist, Eric Aarons, recently published an article in which he said his party could not side with the Soviets because since the fall of Nikita Khrushchev "the process of de-Stalinization was halted, then reversed."

"We didn't mince our words," said Aarons, "when it came to questions of principle—for example the Jewish questions, the way in which Khrushchev was ousted, the violation of artistic and intellectual liberties and the question of Socialist democracy in general."

#### Soviet Criticism

The Soviets responded with a highly critical article in Novoe Vremya, a weekly international affairs periodical, last month which accused Eric Aarons, his brother Laurie, who is secretary general of the Australian party, Bernard Taft and other Australian leaders of making "unfriendly and even hostile statements" about the Kremlin.

The Soviets, in effect, called on loyalists to split away from the party because its new program is "basically unacceptable and is pushing the Australian party onto the path of sectarianism, anti-Sovietism and isolationism from the international Communist movement."

State Department analysts say that the exchange, while stopping short of an open rift, disclosed differences between the two parties that are almost irreconcilable.

The Australian party claims a membership of 5,000. Its candidates received 0.4 per cent of the total vote in 1966 elections.

The two parties are probably divided on the Jewish ques-

tion, with the Australians criticizing the circulation of "anti-Semitic material" in the Soviet Union.

The Australians have taken an active role in the defense of Soviet Jewry after a long public discussion of the issue. As early as 1965 an Australian party document urged the Soviets to launch a campaign "to eliminate all surviving remnants of the virulent anti-Semitism promoted under Czarism."

Eric Aarons and other leaders described as anti-Semitic Soviet propaganda "whether in the form of crude anti-religious propaganda or crude anti-Zionism."

The Soviets rejected those charges and told the Australians that there was no anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. The Australians did not challenge the Soviet position that anti-Semitism was not officially inspired, but blamed the Kremlin for failure to actively fight against it.

Laurie Aarons used the World Communist Conference in 1969 in Moscow as a forum to propose clear condemnation of "all anti-Semitism, wherever it may exist, and this without any reservations or qualifications."

#### Motion Rejected

The conference rejected Aarons' motion. He further infuriated the Russians by openly criticizing the invasion of Czechoslovakia. They decided not to invite him to the Lenin centenary last year. Instead, William Golan, member of the party's presidium, led the Australian delegation.

In private talks with Politburo member Mikhail Suslov, Boris Ponomarov, a secretary of the Soviet central committee, and other officials, Golan said his party could not accept the Brezhnev doctrine, which the Soviets used as justification for the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Golan said, would set a dangerous

precedent the Australians were not prepared to accept because of their proximity to China.

Golan's fears of possible Chinese interference in Australia was described as "nationalistic" by the Soviet officials, according to Australian sources.

Golan told Suslov and Ponomarov that the Australian party had decided to close down the Moscow office of its party paper Tribune. But the paper would continue maintaining its correspondents in China and the United States because they had "revolutionary societies," Golan said.

Golan's criticism of internal Soviet developments and his interest in novelist Alexander Solzhenitsyn had also annoyed the Soviets. Their talks were inconclusive and after Golan's return to Australia the party held its 22nd congress last fall and adopted a program that illustrates the full extent of the Soviet-Australian differences.

A group of Moscow loyalists were decisively defeated at the congress which was highly critical of "crimes and errors" that developed in the Soviet Union. The congress rejected two cornerstones of Communist ideology—the notion of monolithic control and the principle of democratic centralism.

The Novoe Vremya article charged the new Australian program fails even to mention Marxism-Leninism as the theoretical base of the Communist movement." The Soviets said the Australian party narrowed its activities down to supporting the national liberation movements in New Guinea, and other Pacific Islands.

#### Proletarian Support?

"Naturally these tasks are important but it is clear that such regionalism is very far from internationalism," Novoe Vremya said. It said the Australian party has lost its proletarian support."

A small group of pro-Moscow members quit the Australian party. The party leadership expelled this winter two leading pro-Moscow officials, Edgar Ross and Alf Watt, while Pat Clancy, leader of the Construction Workers Union, left the leadership in protest.

With Soviet encouragement, these conservatives are likely to set up a new party. This would further weaken the Communist movement in Australia. The party split in 1964 into pro-Moscow and pro-Peking groups but the pro-Moscow party of the Aarons brothers gradually changed its anti-Chinese stand.

At the moment, however, the Kremlin finds itself without any significant support in the Far East. The New Zealand Communists switched to Maoism seven years ago and the Japanese party has persistently opposed the Soviets on a variety of issues.

#### Chinese Contacts

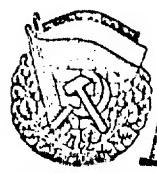
The Australian party has strengthened its position by maintaining close contacts with the Japanese, Chinese and Romanian parties. A Romanian party delegation visited Australia last October.

The Australians also have been courting leftist groups in Europe. Aarons, significantly, published his article in the dissident Communist journal Tagebuch of Vienna.

For the time being, however, the Soviets seem to have decided against an open break with the Australian party, apparently hoping it would send delegates to the 24th Soviet Party Congress next March 30. The absence of an Australian delegation would be a serious propaganda blow to the Soviets because it would deprive them of claims that they have a following in Australia.

TRIBUNE, Sydney  
23 September 1970

CPYRGHT



Proletáři všech zemí, spojte se!

# RUDE PRÁVO

ORGÁN ÚSTŘEDNÍHO VÝBORU KOMUNISTICKÉ STRANY ČESkoslovenska

The Czechoslovak Communist Party daily, Rude Pravo, on July 15 carried this article headlined:

Report on the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of Australia — Retreat from the Principles of

Marxism-Leninism.

As only the Czech-language text was available to Tribune, the translation that we have made must be regarded as unofficial.

We are printing the Rude Pravo article, and Tribune's reply in full.

In a letter to the Czechoslovak Communist Party, the CPA National Secretary, Mr. Laurie Aarons, has proposed that Rude Pravo publish Tribune's reply, in a similar service to freedom of information.

# Czecho- slovakia

CPYRGHT

RECENTLY the Communist Party of Australia held its 22nd National Congress in Sydney.

The preparation and conduct of the Congress, as well as the policy of the party, confirmed that the leadership of the CPA is under the influence of right-wing opportunist revisionist elements. The rightwing group under the leadership of the brothers Laurence and Eric Aarons and B. Taft led the party to the greatest decline and loss of authority which it has known in the last 30 years.

At the same time, today's leadership of the Communist Party of Australia feels itself able to bring categorical judgment on other brotherly parties, including the Com-

unist Party of Australia is itself in a grave crisis. At a guess, the Communist Party of Australia has about 8000 members today.

ties throughout the whole international communist movement.

Without going into the political credo of the Australian daily paper the Sydney Morning Herald, it would not seem to be far from the truth when it cited, in connection with the 22nd Congress, the opinion of a rank and file communist: "The National Congress to trying to avoid a ghost — the ghost of Marxists-Leninists."

From the example of the Communist Party of Australia it is possible to demonstrate in reality how the representatives of the international rightwing opportunist and revisionist movement are using the same worn out, stereotyped arguments and too-

The roots of the present crisis in the CPA can be found within the last 15 years. Already then after the defeat of the Hungarian uprising the Australian revisionist grouping joined in the anti-communist movement and tried to pull the leadership to their side. The Marxist-Leninist group was at that time strong enough to counter this move but since then has not shown enough power to protect the Party from the growing influence of the rightwing opportunist group.

These forces, following the practices used in other parties, began in the CPA to detract attention from its policies, from national revolutionary and international tasks and

presented new questions in a "creative" way. This is already a well-known method of disrupting the unity of the international communist movement and more or less of masking anti-Sovietism. This new important step of the rightwing opportunists in Australia was noted in 1967 after the 21st Congress.

The CPA primarily has its strength in the cities where it allowed itself to be influenced by certain economic conjectures of a home-grown capitalism flowing primarily from Australian co-operation in the plans of aggressive American imperialism in this part of the world. The CPA evolved from the thesis of organisation, "Coalition of the Left", which embraces all that stand against the monopolies, but at the same time the party overestimated its powers and opportunities.

Instead of trying to reach the forefront of the broad masses through Marxist-Leninist principles of a working class revolutionary party, they step by step turned their ideological platform and opened their doors and leadership to a new type of political following, e.g., middle class socialist groupings. A social-democratic revisionist trend began to seep into the leadership of the Communist Party. It is at this point typical that, with its general decline of interest in national politics, the Party had the tendency to speculate on various theories in the international communist movement.

Representatives of the right-wing, always vocal in the scene of the international communist movement, began to give attention to the rightwing revisionist and opportunist "specifically Australian" movement, of course without reference to the actual position.

In fact this comprised a revision of Marxism-Leninism on the ground that the main problem of the Party was to overcome "blind copying" of the examples of other parties, and also regarding unity in the international communist movement and various other questions.

The rightwing movement of the CPA is so close to the views of the rightwing of the Czechoslovak party that it is hard to believe that Sydney is 16,080 kilometres away from Prague.

Rather than interesting themselves in the problems of the agricultural workers, the social standing of the Aborigines and with the Australian participation in the American aggression in Vietnam, the leaders of the rightwing of the CPA interested themselves in the questions of democracy in the socialist countries and especially a lot of space was allocated in the party press to applauding the "liberalisation" in Czechoslovakia.

One does not wonder that they admired Israeli aggression against the Arab national liberation movement and that they discussed the necessity to fight against antisemitism in the socialist countries. The pages of the Party paper began to encourage hysteria and an intolerable interference in the affairs of brother parties, quite unoriginally copying to the very word between the statements of the leaders of the international rightwing opportunist influence, as shown even in their stereotyped "specifically national Australian" path to socialism.

One of the leaders of the rightwing of the CPA announced at the Left Action conference in April 1969 that Australia under the leadership of the Communist Party of Australia would show the world the example of a true socialism.

It is not hard to imagine how great must have been the ideological harmony between the rightwing opportunist forces in the leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the Aarons group in the leadership of the CPA.

It is not surprising that in this situation, the defeat of the Czechoslovakian counter-revolution and the political liquidation of the rightwing opportunists and revisionists in the leadership of the CPC led to a CPA campaign against the new leadership of the CPC and the socialist allies of Czechoslovakia. In June 1969 in Moscow at a meeting of the Communist and Workers' Parties, the representative of the CPA did not take into consideration in any way whatsoever the viewpoint of the CPC and tried to open up the so-called Czechoslovakian question. The rightwing-led CPA once again brought forward their middle-class policy re the "Czechoslovakian question" in preparation for their 22nd Congress. In the light of this their general secretary, L. Aarons, at the beginning of October was not prepared to accept the views of the central committee of the CPC which were unanimously accepted by the Plenum in September 1969.

The leadership of the CPC discovered from the Australian party press that the "Czechoslovakian question" was to be once again brought up at the 22nd Congress. In its anxiety to eliminate misunderstandings in the party and in an attempt to strengthen the unity of the international communist movement, a letter was sent which was to pave the way for comradely unifying of diverse opinions. In the latter there was expressed the maximum effort to allow for the lack of information of the CPA concerning the situation in the Czechoslovakian republic. The leadership of the CPA was informed of the results of the efforts of our party to lead our country out of the political and economic crisis. Finally, there was our request that the CPA, whilst commenting on the development in the Czechoslovakian republic, should consider the points and opinions of our party and so that they should not put forward for discussion the so-called "Czechoslovakian question" at the CPA 22nd Congress.

This effort of the CPC to formulate some understanding was not understood by the CPA. In lieu of assent to this request, there was an effort to use all possibilities to strengthen the influence of the rightwing.

The letter of the Central Committee of the CPC was circulated to all delegates with the comment by the leadership of the CPA that the so-called "Czechoslovakian question" should be discussed and further, obviously in the interests of increasing the authority and the international standing of the leadership of the CPA, the letter was in some mysterious way delivered to the Australian bourgeois press. This fact alone is a sufficient example of the lack of seriousness and the lack of comradeship on the side of the rightwing leadership of the CPA to the solution of mutual internal relationships between two brotherly parties.

The 22nd Congress was itself the meeting point of two diverse tendencies. The Marxist-Leninist part of the leadership put forward to the Congress its own alternative program, which was easily outvoted by the skilful rightwing direction of the Congress. At the finale of the 22nd Congress of the CPA appeared a document expressing the departure from the principles of Marxist-Leninist and proletarian internationalism. It contains a number of revisionist theses under the badly disguised anti-Soviet and anti-socialist attacks. The rightwing group of the brothers Aarons allowed the Congress to accept a resolution which does not recognise socialist States as socialist, but only as a number of States which are emerging from socialistic principles. The position of the rightwing was further strengthened after the Congress.

We are afraid that the headlines of the Australian bourgeois press talking of the triumph of the anti-Soviet revisionist group are not far from the truth.

We do not want to put forward any critical judgments or to give instructions and advice as to the solving of internal problems of another brother party, but we would like to mention that no political party which wishes to be a proletarian Marxist-Leninist, revolutionary party, ever got anywhere whilst riding the waves of anti-Soviet nationalism.

We can only hope that a healthy Marxist-Leninist core of the CPA will gradually overcome the complicated internal and ideological crisis of the CPA, and will overcome the unsympathetic influences and the results of the unbridled international anti-communist campaign and gradually elevate to the leadership of the CPA those forces that would, with decorum, continue the proletarian internationalist traditions of the 50 years old fight of the Australian Communists.

— Pavel Nejedly

• For Tribune's reply, see below.

TRIBUNE, Sydney  
23 September 1970

# Tribune Replies

CPYRGHT

WITHIN 24 hours of the August, 1968 intervention in Czechoslovakia the Soviet authorities gave several different explanations of how it all happened. One was by Pravda

and Government leaders of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic have asked the USSR and other allied States to give the fraternal Czechoslovak people urgent assistance, including

Nearly two years after the event, these "leaders" still remain anonymous, although there are signs of ideological preparation in Prague for their identification and retrospective recognition as the "genuine Marxists-Leninists".

This "crisis of information", obscuring reality and obstructing real political life, is one of the most serious obstacles to democratic development in socialist countries. In this cybernetic age, computers can rapidly answer the most complicated questions — but only if they are fed the correct information.

The Rude Pravo article by Pavel Nejedly reprinted here is rich in examples of spreading wrong information, either from ignorance or from using untrustworthy sources, or from ill-will — or perhaps a combination of all three.

It would take too long and would scarcely be worthwhile to rebut every misstatement of fact or intentional distortion of reality in Nejedly's article. Apart from the barren statement of fact that Sydney is 16,082 kilometres from Prague, the article reveals an abysmal ignorance of Australia generally, of the Communist Party of Australia specifically.

Thus, the author openly depends, for most of his estimates, upon one of the most conservative Australian newspapers, and the bourgeois press generally. And he omits to inform his readers that the Sydney Morning Herald "expert" on CPA affairs is an ex-communist who is known for his anti-communism — and that this "expert" displays in his writing a sympathetic bias towards what Mr. Nejedly calls the "healthy core" in the CPA. (Incidentally, this gentleman knows better than anyone else in what "mysterious way" he secured a copy of the CPC letter to the CPA at the time of the CPA Congress. He also knows that he did not secure it from one of the CPA majority.)

After the CPA Congress, the Sydney Morning Herald wrote editorially that the CPA was in deep crisis, and that its influence is diminishing — just as Mr. Nejedly now does. When CPA National Secretary Laurie

Aarons replied in a letter to the SMH at the time, he said: "We state quite clearly that the essential cause of revolutionary potential in Australia, as in other countries of the world, is to be found within monopoly capital society, and cannot be imported.

"Nor does it depend on moral or financial support from outside. It is to be found in the tensions and contradictions of modern capitalism which can neither contain nor give a human direction to the scientific and technological revolution.

"That is why we are convinced that the Herald will fairly soon rediscover the 'communist menace'."

Although the Herald suppressed this letter, it very soon did precisely as the letter predicted, as the struggle developed. Mr. Nejedly would also find, if he read even the Australian bourgeois press carefully, that the Australian ruling class fears CPA policy, because it is too militant for their taste. Such extreme right-wing journals as the Bulletin, Newsweekly and the NSW Employers' Federation Journal condemn CPA policy as "Left adventurist", unfavorably contrasting it with that of Mr. Nejedly's "healthy core".

Indeed, he is not even well-informed about the minority group he blesses in the CPA, who are now all for caution, conservatism and respectability, condemning CPA policy as "Left adventurist".

He also departs from the views of that group, as from facts and logic, in accusing the CPA of detracting from and a decline in interest in Australian politics.

One of the major arguments in the CPA has been precisely over the real meaning of proletarian internationalism. The CPA majority has stressed the decisive and overriding internationalist responsibility of opposing one's own imperialism, in particular Australian government support of the US imperialist war in Vietnam, Australian colonialism in New Guinea and the oppression of the Aborigines. The minority have opposed this stress as nationalism and regionalism. In fact, for this minority as, apparently, for Mr. Nejedly, internationalism is reduced to support of every policy of the USSR.

Timing of this Rude Pravo article was a bit unfortunate, coming long enough after the May Moratorium to expect that a writer on Australia would at

least have had some idea of how broad is the opposition to the war, how active the CPA has been in this broad movement, and how passive has been the contribution of the minority group. Unfortunately for Mr. Nejedly, too, his article appeared just before the big Sydney demonstration in support of the Aboriginal Gurindji land rights, another broad activity supported by the CPA (its national secretary happened to be arrested and assaulted by police in this demonstration), while the group supported by Rude Pravo has noticeably failed to give it any support.

Nor is Mr. Nejedly any more fortunate in his efforts to find a social cause for alleged "right-wing opportunist revisionist" policies, in the CPA's "base in the cities". In fact, this means its base among workers in industry, blue collar workers first of all. The CPA's membership is predominantly working class; so was the Congress; so was the leadership elected by Congress. Far from having "opened their doors and leadership to middle class socialist groupings", the Party remains proletarian in composition. At the same time the party is working to develop its activities among the sections of society such as students and intellectuals, as Lenin advocated so clearly and so often.

Some other misstatements of fact are scarcely worth dignifying with a reply. For example, Mr. Nejedly asserts that the CPA "admired the Israeli aggression against the Arab national liberation movement" which is an absurd lie, easily nailed. Similarly no CPA leader or anyone else "announced at the Left Action Conference that the CPA leadership would show the world the example of a true socialism."

However, this reveals a most sensitive spot. There is a connection between revolutionary struggle for socialism in capitalist countries and social reality in countries where revolution has already taken place. That connection lies in the world appeal of socialism, in competition with capitalism. This competition cannot be confined to the economic. Socialism can only win if it competes successfully on all fronts,

and is motivated by revolutionary verve and continuous advance in all spheres of social life.

Socialism must also win in the field of human liberty and democracy. It cannot, for example, appeal to trade unionists if union leaders, elected by the workers, are replaced by decision of some small body of the Party. It cannot appeal to democrats if Members of Parliament are changed by a top body of the party without the people being allowed by-elections. It cannot appeal to communists if Party re-registration depends upon acceptance of a foreign intervention and a policy imposed from on top, without a Party Congress, or if this re-registration is planned to secure a "majority" by removing nearly half the membership.

Marx wrote of the need to " vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations."

No one can so stretch this clear and simple Marxist definition into a cloak to cover the five-power military intervention in Czechoslovakia, or the gradual authoritarian enforcement from outside and on top of an almost complete reversal of policies and a virtually complete change of leadership and personnel in all areas, without a party congress, a trade union congress or national elections.

It avails nothing to blind oneself deliberately to reality and truth. The whole world knows that the Czechoslovak people — workers, farmers, intellectuals, youth — did not voluntarily accept and still resent deeply the occupation of their country.

We continue to accept as reflecting popular opinion the following statement by Dr. Husak on August 28, 1968: "I know that demands — stringent and, let us admit it, for I do not want to mince words, justified demands — were made for the departure of the Soviet troops from our country; but for your demands to be met you need two sides."

Great social problems are created by the continuing occupation and its consequences, which cannot be overcome by any

number of generalised assertions of adherence to Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

Rude Pravo may assert its authority as custodian of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy and truth as much as it wishes, whether self-bestowed or derived from the highest authority in Moscow. It may even consider itself entitled to pass on by proxy the accolade to a group in the CPA. All this means nothing, unless it is substantiated by facts, ideological argument and serious debate.

Affixing of labels like "revisionist", without substantiation, is ludicrously like theological denunciation of heresies and threat of excommunication, when even the most authoritarian of churches is learning the hard way that this is no longer easy or efficacious.

Still less is it successful to give dispensation to a factional group and to try to characterise the majority of a Party as being deceived by another group allegedly led by the brothers L. and E. Aarons and B. Taft, or anyone else.

As the CPA national executive recently pointed out, analysing just the same argument as Mr. Nejedly develops:

"Just think what you are suggesting! The district and state conferences were attended by over 700 delegates, one for each six or so Party members. These delegates voted by four to one in favor of the Party's general line, and elected their delegates to Congress. Are you seriously suggesting that these hundreds of delegates, most of them workers off the jobs, were manipulated by a few leaders?"

The real insult of this is not to the "leaders" but to those pictured as thoughtless, loyal and misled sheep.

Australian communists have keenly discussed their policy lines

over the period since their 21st Congress in 1967. They are eager to enter into debate on these questions, but the method of argument used by Mr. Nejedly in Rude Pravo is entirely unconvincing.

The experience of political life in Australia over the past three years has by and large confirmed the validity of the policies decided by the party. Mr. Nejedly's sterile strictures notwithstanding, Australian communists will certainly go on with their efforts to implement these policies, and to make their party a still more effective instrument of revolutionary socialist challenge to the existing capitalist order.

—Malcolm Salmon

NEW TIMES, Moscow  
1 January 1971

## The Situation in the Communist Party of Australia

**Editor's Note:** Following the publication in New Times (No. 36, September 9, 1970) of an abridged translation of the article by Pavel Nejedly in the Czechoslovak Communist Party organ Rude Pravo, concerning the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of Australia, we received a number of letters from readers asking for more details about the situation in the Australian Party. "From the speech delivered by the head of the Australian delegation at the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969, which was published in our press, we know that the leadership of the CPA took a dissentient position, which was criticized by a number of other delegations," reader N. Glazunov of Novosibirsk writes. "I would like to know more about the latest developments in that Party."

THE author of the above letter to New Times rightly recalls the stand taken at the 1969 Meeting by representatives of the Australian Communist Party. That stand did not emerge overnight. Developments in the Australian Communist Party in recent years cannot but cause concern to those who follow with sympathy the struggle of the working class and all working people of Australia against the domestic and foreign policy of the ruling element, for the socialist future of their country.

The Australian Communist Party, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1970, has inscribed many a glorious page in the history of the Australian and the international working class movement. The Communists, as the ideological vanguard of the working class of Australia, gave the working people a clear perspective of struggle against capitalist exploitation and consistently defended the interests of the masses. The names of Australian Communists and true internationalists like the CPA leaders G. B. Miles and Lawrence Sharkey, the prominent trade unionist James Healy, and the renowned novelist Katharine Susannah Prichard are known throughout the world. The Party has long-standing internationalist traditions. Its close ties with the international working class and communist movement have always been a source of strength for the Party, helping it to overcome the difficulties arising in the course of the class struggles.

All the more regrettable is it to observe the turn developments have taken in the CPA in the recent period. In 1967 the 21st Congress of the Party, on the recommendation of its new

leadership, annulled the programme "Australia's Way Forward" adopted at the previous Congress (in 1964). At the same time, the principle of democratic centralism—the fundamental principle in the building of any truly revolutionary party—was to all intents and purposes deleted from the Rules.

The leaders of the CPA, specifically Laurie Aarons, Eric Aarons and Berrie Taft, began to come out with unfriendly and even hostile statements about the socialist countries and their policies. They took an ambiguous stand with regard to the events in the Middle East, evading condemnation of the Israeli aggression against the Arab peoples. They gradually ceased to criticize the splitting, adventurist policy of the Peking leaders. Instead of combating the subversive activities of the latter, from which the Australian Communist Party itself suffered, the CPA leaders began demonstratively to stress their interest in the Chinese "experiment," particularly the so-called "cultural revolution."

In the past two years many political leaders who at first were disoriented by the events in Czechoslovakia have been able to see the situation in proper perspective and have supported the efforts of the sound forces in the Czechoslovak Communist Party to normalize the situation in the country and defend their socialist gains. The CPA leaders, on the contrary, continue with a stubbornness worthy of better application to uphold the Right-opportunist "Dubcek line," although that line has been fully exposed and rejected by the Czechoslovak Communists.

As we know, the CPA delegation at the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969 refused to sign the collectively drafted document "Tasks at the Present Stage of the Struggle Against Imperialism and United Action of the Communist and Workers' Parties and all Anti-Imperialist Forces." The Tribune, weekly organ of the Australian Communist Party, confined itself merely to publishing a brief report of Section III of that document, while the contents of Sections I, II and IV did not appear in the Party press in any form. Moreover, on returning to Australia, the delegation did its utmost to minimize the significance of the Meeting, to vilify its results, not stopping at downright falsification. Taft, for example, on returning from the Meeting, declared that in Moscow "deliberate efforts were made to prevent free and comradely discussion." Yet the head of the Australian delegation, L. Aarons, while in Moscow, spoke highly of the atmosphere prevailing at the Meeting. "Every Party," he said, "can state its views freely," and he stressed that "everyone is heard in a comradely atmosphere." (See interview in Tribune, June 18, 1969.)

After the 1969 Meeting the oppor-

tunistic colouring of the Party's position became more marked and the tendency to depart from opinions shared by the communist movement as a whole more pronounced. This was particularly evident during the preparations for the 22nd Congress of the Australian Communist Party, held in March 1970. The columns of the Tribune were given over to the most unfriendly and biased criticism of the U.S.S.R. and the CPSU, their past and present. The Tribune misrepresented the motives of Soviet policy and many facts pertaining to Soviet life. It attacked the leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and its policy of strengthening socialism in Czechoslovakia. At times it was hard to escape the impression that the organ of the CPA was trying to outdo the bourgeois press in denying the successes of socialist construction and smearing socialist democracy.

The unfriendly attitude of the CPA leadership towards the countries of the socialist community was reflected in the documents of the 22nd Congress. In the main document of the Congress, "Aims, Methods and Organization of the CPA," these countries were even denied the right to be called socialist; they were referred to as "socialist-based countries" (!) The authors of this "discovery" are trailing in the wake of bourgeois propaganda which has long since gone out of its way to avoid calling the socialist countries socialist. Add to this that the entire section of the new programme dedicated to the socialist system ("the socialist-based countries") literally bristles with inimical remarks and unfounded accusations. The authors of the document invented a long list of "sins" committed by socialism, echoing the usual assertions of its bourgeois opponents.

The CPA leaders are endeavouring in this way to blame others for the difficulties experienced by their Party, for their own failings and weaknesses, and to attribute them to the "mistakes" of the socialist countries. The groundlessness of such manoeuvres is obvious. This was pointed out by many of the participants in the 1969 Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties. Rodney Arismendi, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Uruguayan Communist Party, for example, said: "We cannot agree with those who evaluate the relations between the CPSU and the revolutionaries of the capitalist world according to a special measure: they take credit for the successes deriving from the historic transformations in the socialist countries, while the inevitable consequences of the class struggle in the world arena and the needs linked up with the defence of the socialist system, which are also prerequisites of the development of the world revolutionary process, they regard as an obstacle to their own successes...."

The stand taken by the CPA leadership offers a striking example of the consequences of inability to resist the pressure of bourgeois ideology and direct blackmail on the part of reactionaries who for purposes of provocation demand of the Communist leaders in the capitalist countries that they prove their "independence" by making anti-Soviet statements and attacking the socialist states. The same thing, incidentally, is being demanded also by the vociferous blackmailers "from the Left," the diverse anarchist, Trotskyite and other anti-Marxist groups, for whom anti-Sovietism is practically the hallmark of "revolutionariness." The CPA leadership has clearly been unable to withstand pressure of this kind.

In the international section of the new CPA programme the principles of proletarian internationalism, the internationalist duty of parties are interpreted in a very narrow sense. Even the necessity to fight for an end to the Vietnam war is motivated by considerations of abstract humanism rather than the desire to rebuff imperialism. The world-wide fight for peace is barely touched upon. No mention is made of the acute situation in the Middle East, where the Arab nations have fallen victim to an imperialist conspiracy. Apart from the problems of the Vietnam war, the international horizon of CPA activity is essentially limited to support for the national liberation struggle of the people of New Guinea and the other Pacific islands, and also the liberation movement of the Australian aborigines. These, of course, are important issues, but it is clear that such regionalism is very remote from internationalism in the broad sense as it has always been understood by Communists.

This singular interpretation of the internationalist obligations of the parties is closely tied up with the general evolution of the programme principles of the CPA leadership which found expression in the "Aims, Methods and Organization," a document, in which the departure from the principled positions of the International Communist movement under the flag of struggle against "theoretical conformism" is clearly evident. The very fact that the decisions of the 22nd Congress make no mention whatever of Marxism-Leninism as the theoretical foundation of the communist movement is in itself indicative. The concept of a "future society" is treated in the vaguest and most general terms, the main emphasis being placed on drawing a line of distinction between the Australian "variant of socialism" and that which already exists.

The authors of the new programme reject also the Leninist principles of Party building. "We reject the idea of so-called 'monolithic' organization," says the programme, and further: "it

[the Party] aims to subject all theories and forms of organization to critical analysis." "The Communist Party, in seeking to add to its members and influence, welcomes into its ranks all socialists who share its basic ideas, even though they may differ on some points...." A party based on such principles is liable to become a debating society rather than a militant organization of likeminded revolutionaries.

The idea is advanced of a "coalition of the Left" for the purpose of effecting "revolutionary social change" in Australia. This amorphous coalition is conceived as a very broad and free union of "Communists, the growing Left within the Labour Party, union militants, students, intellectuals, anarchists, libertarians [i.e., proponents of unrestricted liberty.—Ed.], etc." From the whole context it is evident that the idea of such a motley coalition with vaguely defined common ideals and objectives is counterposed to the Marxist principle of the leading role of the working class in the struggle to overthrow capitalism and build a socialist society. Although the authors of the new programme do speak of drawing on working class support, this is not backed up either by the new organizational principles of the Party or by the plans for the establishment of a new "coalition of the Left".

Of course, rapprochement and united action of the Left is an important thing and an imperative of our time. This is set forth clearly in the final document of the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties. But struggle for the unity of the Left forces does not mean that the Communist parties should lose their identity, their class character, by merging in broad coalitions. The entire experience of the communist movement militates against such a step. Yet the "liberal" leanings of some Australian Communists who preach "tolerance" of views inimical to communism lead to erasing the distinction between the Communist Party and its "coalition" partners.

Such in general outline is the situation that has emerged of late in the Communist Party of Australia. It cannot but cause concern to many members of that Party. The pre-congress Party conferences at district and city level were marked by sharp struggle against the leadership's "new course."

To avoid a split, the Communists opposed to this course proposed that the Congress refrain from adopting new programme documents and that "unity committees" be set up at the level of district and state Party organizations to work out a strategic line and tactics acceptable to the Party as a whole. They pointed out that the draft programme submitted by the leadership does not reflect the opinion of a substantial section of the membership, that

it is basically unacceptable and impels the Party onto the path of sectarianism, anti-Sovietism and isolation from the international communist movement.

Eight members of the National Committee of the CPA who spoke at the Congress against the "new course" and the new programme were dropped from the leadership. Pat Clancy, member of the National Committee, leader of the militant Building Workers' Industrial Union and a member of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, sent a letter to the Party leadership announcing his decision to resign from the National Committee because he could not accept the present policy and methods of the leadership. The Party leadership has to all intents and purposes broken with the Communists in the trade unions who have traditionally been the proletarian mainstay of the CPA, the source of its influence.

At the same time elements patently hostile to communism are coming into the Party. The door has been opened to Trotskyites and members of other trends inimical to Marxism-Leninism. They were even invited to attend the Congress and they used its platform to demand, almost in the form of an ultimatum, that the CPA dissociate itself completely from the CPSU. The leader of one of the two Trotskyite groups in Australia (at loggerheads with each other), D. Freney, praised the programme as the "final step in the qualitative turn in the Communist Party." Now this headman of the Sydney Trotskyites has been included in the editorial board of the *Tribune*. At the same time the decision on "unity of the party" adopted by the Congress is full of undisguised threats against Communists who reject the anti-Soviet course. That these are not empty threats is seen by the expulsion from the Party for that reason of two of its veteran members, Edgar Ross and Alf Watt, and also the recent decision of the Sydney Committee to disband a militant Party organization which is the Marxist-Leninist core of the seamen's, dockers' and shipbuilders' unions.

In the present world situation in which the class struggle continues with unabated force, when the imperialists are stepping up machinations against the socialist countries, and ideological subversion against the international communist movement is mounting, the struggle for the purity of the creative teachings of Marxism-Leninism assumes a special significance. In its message of greeting to the Communist Party of Australia on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, the CC of the CPSU expressed the hope that the Australian Communists, "on the basis of a principled Marxist-Leninist approach, will be able to overcome the difficulties that have arisen in the Australian communist movement and will follow the revolutionary traditions of their Party."

WIENER TAGEBUCH, Vienna  
10 October 1970

Australia: An Autonomous CP

The 22nd Party Congress of the CP of Australia (CPA) which took place at Easter in 1970 confirmed the new organization which had developed in the '60's, especially in the second half of the decade. It meant a decision to break with many practices, methods, and ways of thinking of the past, and still it meant continuity and a revival of old socialist ideals and aspirations. Eric Aarons, member of the Central Committee of CPA and chief editor of the Left Review wrote to us about this new orientation and its causes.

\* \* \*

The new orientation of the Australian CP (CPA) crisis arises from many sources. The most important of these are: the problem of socialistic development in the existing socialist countries and their relationship to one another; the scientific-technical revolution and the changed economic development in the modern capitalistic states; the changeable course of the revolutionary struggle in the Third World; the rise of new spheres and forms of political struggles, such as the student movement and the May 1968 events in France, which represented a proof of revolutionary potential in the developed capitalistic countries. Every socialist and Communist party must come to terms with these problems; but one cannot do justice to the position of the CPA concerning these problems without knowing the special characteristics of its situation.

Russian, China, and Australia

The year 1956 caused a great shock in Australia as it did everywhere in the Communist movement. But at first not much changed, for a number of reasons, but two were of special importance, in my opinion. The first was the boldness with which the serious errors were admitted, and this boldness served as a proof of the good will of the CPSU leadership to set things straight if only they were given time and understanding. Such a reaction naturally depended on insufficient insight into the real essence of "Stalinism." The second important (and associated) reason was the influence of the concepts of the Chinese CP, concepts which seemed reasonable and well considered. They were listened to so much the more willingly because the Chinese Communists commanded the greatest respect. The serious conflict between the CCP and the CPSU, which broke into the open in the beginning of the '60's, carried over into our party: E. F. Hill, member of the Party Secretariat, supported the Chinese concepts and threatened a split, which later became reality. Although well known international problems were the prominent in this conflict, there were other more important ones which affected the intra-party practices and strategy of the CPA. In order to survive, we had to occupy ourselves with the problems in the most fundamental way and to try to solve them in our own way. This was in fact a "declaration of independence," but was regarded by many (as it turned out, also by the CPSU) as a matter of

partisanship in behalf of the Russians because, for the most part, we rejected the Chinese conceptions. That we didn't take the Russian side became gradually clear, particularly when the process of "de-Stalinization" came to a stop after the overthrow of Khrushchev and then actually retrogressed. Nor were we shy about talking about questions of principle (for example the Chinese question, the manner of deposing Khrushchev, the violation of artistic and intellectual freedom, and finally the problems of socialist democracy).

Perhaps it would be fitting to mention a personal experience which I had at the end of 1965 on my return from Chile and Cuba to Moscow. I was subjected to all kinds of pressure to have the Australian Party publish a "major" article which the CPSU would make available to the CPA. It also would be the answer to the most recent propaganda shot from the CCP (in November 1965). The manner in which this matter was handled made it clear that other "major" articles had been placed in this manner before. In increasing degree we recognized Soviet intervention and the (often very clumsy) attempts to provoke comrades against the party leadership, obviously in an effort to overthrow them and to substitute leaders acceptable to the CPSU. It is a practice which has been followed in many instances against Communist parties throughout the world.

### Overcoming the Stalin Myth

As important as it was to insist on our independence in organizational and political methods, it was even more important --- and more difficult --- to break with the ideology that supports these methods. This ideology has been very vividly described by Marek in his article, "On the Structure of the Stalin Myth," which has also been published in Australia.

However, it was not enough to reject this ideology: it was necessary to understand it. And it was even more necessary to develop a new outlook which was based on Marxism as a whole but especially on its methodology and which offered the possibility of solving some of the difficult problems which arose out of the developments mentioned in my introductory paragraph above.

In a short article it is impossible to go into all aspects of the progress which developed or into all problems which needed solution. But the question of democracy was clearly a central problem which we ran into at every step. We ran into it when we spoke openly about the principal problems in the world movement and we didn't let ourselves be deflected by opportunistic considerations ("What will they think and do if we say that?") or by pathetic appeals to "a class stand" or "party loyalty." We knew that it would mean obscurantism if we beforehand set limits beyond which we were not suppose to go, and we knew that many closed books and settled questions would have to be re-opened and dealt with and that freedom of thought is an essential precondition for all intellectual effort. We ran into it also in our intra-party discussions, which had to be really free of all limitations (not "directed" from above and only apparently free), if it were to lead to a clarification of ideas and a working out of the problems.

Shift to the Right

When the Czechoslovak crisis broke out and the Action Program showed how the suppression of democracy under Novotny and the others, how the monopolization of power in the hands of the party leadership had led to this crisis, we took a completely unequivocal stand from which we did not permit ourselves to be dissuaded either by threats or by promises of the CPSU and its supporters. Czechoslovakia changed nothing in the CPA; it merely brought more freshly into our consciousness the significance of democracy for socialistic societies and the Communist Party, and the necessity for a decisive defense of independence. It also hastened the process of re-thinking and renewed study which was already in process.

Many well meaning people --- and others --- were of the opinion that our emphasis on freedom and democracy was a shift to the "right," in the direction of bourgeois liberalization. And in fact the concern for democracy can lead in this direction. But it can also lead in the direction of an even more revolutionary criticism of bourgeois democracy, to reformulation of socialist goals in the sense of freedom, self-rule, and control by the workers, as Marx and Lenin understood them. It can lead to more militant action with the objective of breaking out of the "consensus politics" which so often in the recent past have had the effect of limiting Communists to actions which are acceptable to the ruling order. It is in this sense that the CPA understands the emphasis on democracy; and this is understood also by the pro-Russian party opposition which, conservative to its very bones even in intra-party questions, constantly screams about "left adventurism." The capitalists, their governments, and their press have also understood this, as is evident from many articles and speeches. It is also no secret that the bourgeoisie constantly supports the opposition against the new orientation of the party --- it knows that this opposition is not dangerous and can only serve to frighten people away from the Communists.

The Cause of the Split

The trade unions are the traditional arena in which the Australian Communists develop their mass activity and their influence. It is therefore not surprising that they were also an important area for the Party's rethinking and reorientation. For a long time there was dissatisfaction in the trade unions with the narrowness of view (almost exclusively limited to the traditional economic demands), with conservative tactics (relying on a defensive stance which had been taken twenty years earlier from a totally different situation), with the subordination of action to the effort of functionaries to maintain their jobs, and with the general conservatism in organization and attitude which alienated the youth and also weakened the reputation and power of the trade unions. Perhaps the most crass example was the opposition of many Communist trade union functionaries to the call of the Central Committee of February 1969 to take action against the anti-trade-union laws. That this call was not "adventurism" was demonstrated three months later when a million workers went out on strike because a trade union functionary had been locked up on the basis of these laws. The decision in the long intra-party struggle came in the factories, where the majority of Communist

workers --- no doubt recalling their own experiences --- closed ranks around the new orientation, despite the fact that half of the Communist trade union functionaries remained in the opposition.

In the regional and district conference before the Party Congress, the conservative opposition suffered a decisive defeat. It received on the average only about a fourth of the delegates and votes. At the Party Congress itself it shriveled up into a small group of less than a tenth of the 150 delegates. Not without justice they complained that this number was not "representative," but it is the result of the "democratic centralism" which they so fervently defend (as happens in other parties as well), a democratic centralism which we consider unsatisfactory and are undertaking to replace with a better principle. At that Party Congress many young non-communists participated as guests and followed the deliberations with lively --- and critical --- interest.

The behavior of the conservatives after the Party Congress was to be expected. They have formed a newspaper to "popularize the achievements of the socialist world" (that is, the Soviet Union and the socialist countries belonging to her), they pay no party dues, and they are building their own party de facto. Even if it has not yet been formed de jure, the reason is to be found in their regard for the tactics of the Soviet Union, which apparently does not consider it yet opportune to promote a splinter party.

The attitude of the CPSU toward the CPA was also foreseeable, but it is interesting in that it in fact demonstrates the Soviet attitude toward the world movement. The CPSU refused to take a position on the documented proof of their intervention in our affairs or to discuss basic problems with us. They made scarcely any secret of the fact that they claimed the right to intervene in our affairs and to support an opposition devoted to them. This can only lead to a further division and weakening of the already bitterly divided and enfeebled world Communist movement and is of ill omen for all those (if there still are such people left) gullible enough to believe that the CPSU's relations with them are based on socialist premises and not on what the Soviet Union considers to be her self-interest (which in Soviet eyes is, of course, identical with the interest of world socialism).

#### For a Coalition of the Left

What is the orientation of the CPA today and how is it expressed in practice since the Party Congress? Here the main document of the Party Congress deserves mention apart from the important points sketched out above. It breaks down into four sections: Capitalism, the Society of the Future, Methods of Realization, and the Communist Party. In the "Capitalism" section an effort is made to define the scientific-technical revolution, and the changes in the structure of classes, imperialism, and the national liberation movement are investigated. Similarly, the influence on the world situation of the countries "with a socialist basis" (that is, the countries which are socialist economically but not in any other respect) is studied. The section "Society of the Future" contains an outline of all our main goals, with the accent on socialist democracy and self-rule. In the section "Methods of Realization,"

the class structure is more closely analyzed, and the role of the state under present-day conditions and the meaning of a "hegemony" and "counter-hegemony" are studied. Here our stand toward the struggle for partial demands, toward control by the workers, toward the Labour Party, and toward the trade unions is defined and contrasted with the position of the "conservatives" and the "anarchists" or the "left." In this, the accent at the present time is on the struggle against the former. Here too, the conception of a 'coalition of the left' is discussed, and I would like to say a few words about that.

The idea of the 'coalition of the left' was formulated for the first time at the Party Congress in 1967. Naturally it is not without connection to early ideas and experience of the "United Front" and "People's Front," but it extends beyond this framework. In this connection the Party Congress document says that "the complex nature of modern society, the variety of social forces interacting on one another, the number of problems setting these forces in motion, the considerable measure of spontaneity, and the reaction to negative experiences of the past, such as overcentralization and ideological conformism, have made it clear that an organization for social change must be so fashioned that it corresponds to contemporary conditions. The Australian Communists suggest 'a coalition of the left for a revolutionary change of society.' The point of departure for this suggestion is that today---and apparently also in the future---there are a number of tendencies which in their general orientation agree on the need for socialist change in present society but have differing opinions on important points of ideology, program, and organization. Among those tendencies the Communists count the growing left in the Labour Party, trade union activists, students, intellectual, anarchists, civil-rightists, etc.

"A 'coalition of the left' implies the most varied forms of common action and co-operation among all these groups, but not only that. While the conscious revolutionaries make up the nucleus of each coalition for the radical alteration of the social system, other forces have limited generally themselves to specific problems---Vietnam, civil rights, reform of social and health welfare, the school system, etc.---and must be supported, and, in certain instances, taken into the coalition. Within such a coalition there will naturally be discussions on theoretic, programmatic, and organizational questions in the course of co-operation and action; and there will also be a competition of opinions. Only on this basis can influence be exercised and a leadership formed.

"Thus we are oriented to the thought that such 'a coalition of the left' will develop and change on the basis of experience and of the development of the situation up to the revolution and even into the revolution itself.

"Such a 'coalition,' which assumes mutual respect, tolerance, and openness among the various groups and parties, will be an important guarantee for genuine democracy in the socialist society of the future."

### Unity in Diversity

It must be emphasized that the "coalition" (we have not found a better word) is not to be understood in the parliamentary sense nor is it a definitive "organizational" unity platform. The closest, and even then not a very close analogy is perhaps the Vietnam moratorium movement in Australia in which practically all of the left (as well as many elements which in any other respect could hardly be called leftist) participated. We have fought for the principle that everyone can take part and that no one dominates (neither a group nor a tendency). There are general goals: withdrawal of all American, Australian, and other foreign troops from Vietnam; cessation of all help for Saigon, and opposition to the draft law. We seek the kind of general form and action which has the greatest effectiveness in the present situation. But neither the Communists nor others set forth far-reaching anti-imperialistic goals (for example support for NLF) nor volunteered for more radical forms of action; everyone "does his thing," so to speak.

Related with this is the growing tendency to reject the rigid, bureaucratic 'orders from above' organization which tends (and in fact intends) to force everyone into one and the same schema. Even if goals and actions are democratically decided, this procedure is rejected by many who strive for "self-rule" and spontaneous self-expression. This the Communists must take into consideration as much in respect to their own organization as in respect to a broader movement or "coalition," although we combat the idea that no organization at all is necessary.

### Beginning of a New Phase of Development

Since the Party Congress we have had the experience of the Vietnam moratorium in May when tens of thousands in all of Australia demonstrated militantly and occupied the streets, when the growing fighting spirit in the trade unions and in the movement for the rights of aborigines, gave to all appearances, sufficient proof that the orientation of the Party Congress was correct. This work is developing in a very promising way as is our important work in the theoretical field.

But it would be incorrect to overlook the difficulties. In addition to apathy and reactionary prejudices (for example racial prejudices) which are widespread in Australia, the fragmentation of the left is cause for concern. (The split in the Party sharpened this fragmentation and is deplorable for this reason particularly.) The fragmentation is not as serious as in the United States where a situation, promising in itself, is so often depreciated by unnecessary conflicts, which are fought out with unnecessary hardness or are carried out on a purely factional basis without real communication or tolerance between the combatants. Here in Australia, too, various groups of the "New Left," Trotskyists, Maoist, and others try to take over organizations (especially the peace movements) and unite only from time to time on an absolutely necessary action but also often (especially when the situation is complicated) on the basis of a cheap anti-Communism.

In many cases the Communist Party seems to represent the only visible element of cohesion; but to play such a role without trying, in accordance with a bad, old custom, to seize an avantgarde position (which so often is a domineering position) is a complicated and demanding task. It requires a clear position and a principled non-sectarian basis for competition with others; it requires strengthened activity and a greater knowledge on the part of the Communists, the development of new forms of party organizations, and an open mind to the possibility that new political formations will arise. The victory at the Party Congress gives us a real possibility of succeeding in this task.

Conditions differ greatly from country to country. But it appears that today, revolutionaries in the whole world are confronted with the same theoretical and practical basic problems. We have just now arrived at the beginning of a meaningful international discussion of the new phase of development of Marxism. Journals like Wiener Tagebuch have, in my opinion, an important role to play in the connection, and I wish it great success in this effort.

WIENER TAGEBUCH, Vienna  
October 1970

# Australien: Eine autonome KP

Der 22. Parteitag der Kommunistischen Partei Australiens, der zu Ostern 1970 stattfand, bestätigte die neue Orientierung, die sich in den sechziger Jahren, besonders in der zweiten Hälfte des Jahrzehnts, herausgebildet hat. Das bedeutete einen entscheidenden Bruch mit vielen Praktiken, Methoden und Denkweisen der Vergangenheit, auf der anderen Seite jedoch die Kontinuität und Wiederbelebung alter sozialistischer Ideale und Aspirationen. Über diese neue Orientierung und ihre Ursachen schrieb für uns Eric Aarons, Mitglied des Zentralkomitees der KP Australiens und Chefredakteur der „Left Review“.

Die Neuorientierung der KP Australiens entspringt vielen Quellen; die wichtigsten sind: die Probleme der sozialistischen Entwicklung in den bestehenden sozialistischen Ländern und deren Beziehungen untereinander; die wissenschaftlich-technische Revolution und die veränderte ökonomische Entwicklung in den modernen kapitalistischen Staaten; der wechselseitige Verlauf des revolutionären Kampfes in der Dritten Welt; das Auftauchen neuer Bereiche und Formen des politischen Kampfes, namentlich der Studentenbewegung; und die französischen Mai-Ereignisse 1968, die einen Beweis für das revolutionäre Potential in den entwickelten kapitalistischen Ländern darstellten. Jede sozialistische und kommunistische Partei muß sich mit diesen Problemen auseinandersetzen; doch man kann die Haltung, die die KP Australiens dazu einnimmt, nicht würdigen, ohne die Besonderheiten ihrer Lage zu kennen.

## RUSSISCH, CHINESISCHE, AUSTRALISCHE?

Das Jahr 1956 bewirkte in Australien, wie überall in der kommunistischen Bewegung, eine starke Erschütterung. Trotzdem änderte sich zunächst nicht viel, und zwar aus einer Reihe von Gründen, von denen meiner Meinung nach zwei besonders wichtig sind. Der erste war die Kühnheit, mit der die schweren Fehler zugegeben wurden, worin man einen Beweis für den guten Willen der KPdSU-Führung sah, die Dinge in Ordnung zu bringen, wenn man ihr nur Zeit ließe und Verständnis entgegenbrächte. Eine solche Reaktion beruhte natürlich auf ungenügender Einsicht in das eigentliche Wesen des „Stalinismus“. Der zweite wichtige (und damit zusammenhängende) Grund war der Einfluß der Auffassungen der chinesischen KP<sup>1)</sup>, die vernünftig und wohlüberlegt erschienen und um so bereitwilliger angehört wurde, als man für die chinesischen Kommunisten den größten Respekt hegte<sup>2)</sup>.

Der schwere Konflikt zwischen der KPCh und der KPdSU, der Anfang der sechziger Jahre offen ausbrach, übertrug sich auch auf unsere Partei: Sekretariatsmitglied E. F. Hill trat für die chinesischen Auffassungen ein und drohte mit einer Spaltung, die später Wirklichkeit wurde. Obwohl bei diesem Kampf die bekannten internationalen Probleme im Vordergrund standen, waren jene noch wichtiger, welche die innerparteiliche Praxis und die Strategie der Partei in Australien betrafen. Um überleben zu können, mußten wir uns mit den Problemen von Grund auf beschäftigen und sie auf unsere Weise zu lösen suchen. Das war faktisch eine „Unabhängigkeitserklärung“, wurde aber von vielen (wie sich zeigte, auch von der KPdSU) als „Parteinahe für die Russen“ angesehen, weil wir die chinesischen Auffassungen zum Großteil ablehnten. Daß wir nicht „für die Russen Partei ergriffen“, wurde allmählich klar, namentlich als der Prozeß der „Entstalinisierung“ nach Chruschtschows Sturz zum Stillstand kam und dann rückläufig wurde, und wir nahmen uns kein Blatt vor den Mund, wenn es um prinzipielle Fragen ging (zum Beispiel um die jüdische Frage, die Form der Absetzung Chruschtschows, die Verletzung der künstlerischen und intellektuellen Freiheit, und überhaupt um Probleme der sozialistischen Demokratie). Vielleicht ist es angebracht, daß ich eine persönliche Erfahrung erwähne, die ich Ende 1965 bei meiner Rückkehr aus Chile und Kuba nach Moskau hatte. Man drang mit aller Macht darauf, daß die australische Partei einen „großen“ Artikel veröffentliche, den die KPdSU zur Verfügung stellen wollte; er sollte die Antwort auf den jüngsten Erfuß der KPCh (vom November 1965) sein. Die Art und Weise, wie die Angelegenheit betrieben wurde, machte es deutlich, daß auch vorher schon „große“ Artikel auf diese Weise placiert worden waren. In zunehmendem Maß erkannten wir die Einmischung und die (oft sehr plumpen) Versuche, Genossen gegen die Parteführung aufzuhetzen, offenkundig in dem Bestreben, diese zu stürzen und durch eine für die KPdSU akzeptable zu ersetzen, wie es schon in so vielen Fällen gegenüber kommunistischen Parteien auf der ganzen Welt praktiziert worden war.

<sup>1)</sup> Zum Beispiel „Historische Erfahrungen der Diktatur des Proletariats“ und „Noch einmal zu den historischen Erfahrungen der Diktatur des Proletariats“.

<sup>2)</sup> Ich selbst und viele andere haben längere Zeit zu Studienzwecken in China verbracht, und die Beziehungen zwischen den beiden Parteien waren sehr eng.

## DIE ÜBERWINDUNG DES STALIN-MYTHOS

So wichtig es war, in diesen organisatorischen und politischen Dingen auf unserer Unabhängigkeit zu bestehen, war es noch wichtiger — und schwerer —, mit der jenen Methoden zu grundlegenden Ideologie zu brechen. Diese Ideologie wurde von Genossen Marek in seinem Artikel „Zur Struktur des Stalin-Mythos“, der auch in Australien veröffentlicht worden ist, sehr anschaulich beschrieben.

Es genügte jedoch nicht, diese Ideologie abzulehnen, es war notwendig, sie zu verstehen. Und noch notwendiger war es, eine andere Anschauung zu entwickeln, die auf dem Marxismus als Ganzes, insbesondere aber auf seiner Methodologie basierte und die Möglichkeit bot, einige der schwierigen Probleme zu lösen, die sich aus der eingangs erwähnten Entwicklung ergaben.

In einem kurzen Artikel ist es unmöglich, auf alle Aspekte der Prozesse einzugehen, die sich auf der oben genannten Grundlage entwickelt haben, oder auf alle Probleme, die es zu lösen gilt. Aber die Frage der Demokratie war zweifellos ein zentrales Problem, auf das wir bei jedem Schritt stießen. Wir stießen darauf, wenn wir offen über prinzipielle Fragen in der Weltbewegung sprachen und uns von keinen opportunistischen Erwägungen („Was werden sie denken und tun, wenn wir das sagen?“) und von keinen pathetischen Appellen an den „Klassenstandpunkt“ und die „Parteitreue“ abhalten ließen. Wir erkannten, daß es Obskurantismus bedeutet, wenn wir von vornherein unüberschreitbare Grenzen setzen, daß manche geschlossenen Bücher und erledigte Fragen neuerlich geöffnet und behandelt werden müssen, und daß Gedankenfreiheit eine wesentliche Voraussetzung für alles Intellektuelle Streben ist. Wir stießen darauf auch in der innerparteilichen Diskussion, die wirklich frei von allen Beschränkungen sein mußte (nicht von oben „geleitet“ und nur scheinbar frei), um zu einer Klärung der Vorstellungen und einer Herausarbeitung der Probleme zu führen.

## RUCK NACH „RECHTS“?

Als die tschechoslowakische Krise ausbrach und das Aktionsprogramm zeigte, wie die Einschränkung der Demokratie unter Novotny und den anderen, die Monopolisierung der Macht in den Händen der Parteführung, zu dieser Krise geführt hatte, bezogen wir eine völlig eindeutige Stellung, von der wir uns weder durch Drohungen noch durch Versprechungen der KPdSU und ihrer Anhänger abbringen ließen. Die Tschechoslowakei hat in der KP Australiens gar nichts verändert; sie hat uns nur neuerlich die Bedeutung der Demokratie für die sozialistische Gesellschaft und die Kommunistische Partei, die Notwendigkeit einer entschlossenen Verteidigung der Unabhängigkeit zum Bewußtsein gebracht und den in Gang befindlichen Prozeß des Umdenkens und Neu-Erforschens beschleunigt.

Manche Leute — wohlmeinende und andere — waren der Ansicht, die Betonung von Freiheit und Demokratie sei ein Ruck nach „rechts“, in die Richtung des bürgerlichen Liberalismus; und tatsächlich kann die Sorge um die Demokratie in diese Richtung führen. Sie kann aber auch in die Richtung einer noch revolutionäreren Kritik der bürgerlichen Demokratie führen, zu einer Neuformulierung der sozialistischen Ziele im Sinn von Freiheit, Selbstverwaltung und Arbeiterkontrolle, wie Marx und Lenin sie vor Augen hatten. Sie kann zu militanterem Handeln führen, mit dem Ziel, die „Konsenspolitik“ zu durchbrechen, die in der jüngsten Vergangenheit so oft bewirkt hat, daß die Kommunisten sich auf Aktionen beschränkten, die für die herrschende Ordnung akzeptabel waren. So versteht die KPA die

Betonung der Demokratie; und das erkennt auch die russisch orientierte Opposition, die, auch in Innenpolitischen Fragen konservativ bis an die Knochen, ständig über „linkes Abenteurertum“ schreit. Die Kapitalisten, ihre Regierungen und ihre Presse haben es ebenfalls erkannt, wie aus vielen Artikeln und Reden zu entnehmen ist. (Es ist auch kein Geheimnis, daß die Bourgeoisie bewußt die Opposition gegen die neue Orientierung der Partei unterstützt — sie weiß, daß diese Opposition für sie nicht gefährlich ist und nur dazu dienen kann, die Menschen von den Kommunisten abzuschrecken.)

## DIE URSAECHEN DER SPALTUNG

Die Gewerkschaften sind der traditionelle Boden, auf dem die australischen Kommunisten vor allem ihre Massenaktivität und ihren Einfluß entfalten. Es ist daher nicht verwunderlich, daß sie auch ein wichtiger Boden für das Umdenken und die Neuorientierung waren. Lange Zeit schon herrschte Unzufriedenheit mit der Enge der Sicht (fast ausschließliche Beschränkung auf die traditionellen wirtschaftlichen Forderungen), mit der konservativen Taktik (beruhend auf einer defensiven Einstellung, die vor zwanzig Jahren einer völlig anderen Situation entsprungen war); mit der Unterordnung der Aktivität unter das Bestreben, offizielle Positionen zu halten, und mit dem allgemeinen Konservatismus in Organisation und Einstellung, der die Jugend abstieß sowie Ansehen und Schlagkraft der Gewerkschaften schwächte. Das krasseste Beispiel vielleicht war der Widerstand vieler kommunistischer Gewerkschaftsfunktionäre gegen den Aufruf des Zentralkomitees vom Februar 1969 gegen die gewerkschaftsfindlichen Gesetze. Daß dieser Aufruf kein „Abenteurertum“ war, zeigte sich drei Monate später, als eine Million Arbeiter in den Streik traten, weil ein Gewerkschaftsfunktionär auf Grund dieser Gesetze eingesperrt worden war. Die Entscheidung in den langen innerparteilichen Kämpfen fiel in den Betrieben, wo die Mehrheit der kommunistischen Arbeiter — zweifellos in Anbetracht ihrer eigenen Erfahrungen — sich der neuen Orientierung anschloß, obwohl die Hälfte der kommunistischen Gewerkschaftsfunktionäre in der Opposition blieb.

In den Landes- und Bezirkskonferenzen vor dem Parteitag erlitt die konservative Opposition eine entscheidende Niederlage; Sie erhielt im Durchschnitt nur etwa ein Viertel der Delegierten und der Stimmen. Auf dem Parteitag selbst schrumpfte sie zu einem Häuflein von weniger als einem Zehntel der 150 Delegierten zusammen; nicht ganz zu Unrecht beklagten sie sich, diese Zahl sei nicht „repräsentativ“, aber sie ist das Ergebnis des von Ihnen (wie auch in anderen Parteien) so glühend verteidigten „demokratischen Zentralismus“, den wir für unbefriedigend ansehen und durch ein besseres Prinzip zu ersetzen trachten. Am Parteitag haben viele junge Nichtkommunisten als Gäste teilgenommen und die Beratungen mit lebhaftem — und kritischem — Interesse verfolgt.

Das Vorgehen der Konservativen nach dem Parteitag war so wie erwartet. Sie haben eine Zeitung gegründet, um die „Erungenschaften der sozialistischen Welt zu popularisieren“ (das heißt der Sowjetunion und der ihr ergebenen sozialistischen Länder), sie zahlen keine Parteibeiiträge und bilden de facto eine eigene Partei. Wenn sie diese noch nicht „de Jure“ gebildet haben, so liegt das hauptsächlich an ihrer Rücksicht auf die Taktik der Sowjetunion, die es wahrscheinlich noch nicht für opportun hält, eine Spalterpartei offen zu fördern.

Die Haltung der KPdSU gegenüber der KPA war ebenfalls vorhersehbar, doch ist sie insofern interessant, als sie die tatsächliche sowjetische Einstellung zur Weltbewegung demonstriert. Die KPdSU hat sich geweigert, zu den von uns dokumentarisch belegten Fällen von Einmischung Stellung zu nehmen oder mit uns über Grundsatzfragen zu diskutieren. Sie

macht kaum ein Hehl daraus, daß sie das Recht habe, sich in unsere Angelegenheiten einzumischen und eine ihr ergebene Opposition zu unterstützen. Das kann nur zu einer weiteren Spaltung und Schwächung der bereits schmerzlich gespaltenen und geschwächten Weltbewegung führen und ist von böser Vorbereitung für alle (wenn es solche noch gibt), die naiv genug sind, zu glauben, die Beziehungen der KPdSU zu ihnen beruhen auf sozialistischen Grundsätzen und nicht auf den vermeintlichen Eigeninteressen der Sowjetunion (die in sowjetischen Augen allerdings mit den Interessen des Weltozialismus identisch werden).

#### FÜR EINE KOALITION DER LINKEN

Was ist heute die Orientierung der KPA und wie kommt sie in der Praxis seit dem Parteitag zum Ausdruck? Hier verdient, abgesehen von den bereits skizzierten wichtigen Aspekten, das Hauptdokument des Parteitags Erwähnung. Es zerfällt in vier Abschnitte: Kapitalismus, Die Gesellschaft der Zukunft, Methoden der Verwirklichung, Die Kommunistische Partei. Im Abschnitt „Kapitalismus“ wird versucht, das Wesen der wissenschaftlich-technischen Revolution zu definieren, es werden die Veränderungen in der Struktur der Klassen, der Imperialismus und die nationale Befreiungsbewegung untersucht, desgleichen die Beeinflussung der Weltlage durch die Länder „mit sozialistischer Basis“ (das heißt die ökonomisch sozialistischen, in anderer Hinsicht aber nicht entsprechend entwickelten Länder). Der Abschnitt „Die Gesellschaft der Zukunft“ enthält eine Skizze unserer Hauptziele, mit dem Akzent auf sozialistischer Demokratie und Selbstverwaltung. Im Abschnitt „Methoden der Verwirklichung“ wird die Klassenstruktur genauer analysiert, die Rolle des Staates unter den heutigen Bedingungen und die Bedeutung von „Hegemonie“ und „Gegenehegemonie“ untersucht. Hier wird unsere Haltung zum Kampf für Teilstufen, zur Arbeiterkontrolle, zur Labour Party und zu den Gewerkschaften definiert und der Haltung der „Konservativen“ und der „Anarchisten“ oder „Linken“ gegenübergestellt, wobei in der gegenwärtigen Lage der Akzent auf dem Kampf gegen die erstgenannten liegt. Hier wird auch die Konzeption einer „Koalition der Linken“ erörtert, über die ich einige Worte sagen möchte.

Der Gedanke einer „Koalition der Linken“ wurde zum erstenmal auf dem Parteitag im Jahre 1967 formuliert. Er ist natürlich nicht ohne Zusammenhang mit früheren Vorstellungen und Erfahrungen der „Einheitsfront“ und „Volksfront“, geht aber über diesen Rahmen hinaus. Im Parteidokument heißt es dazu: „Die komplexe Natur der modernen Gesellschaft, die Mannigfaltigkeit der in Aktion tretenden sozialen Kräfte, die Vielzahl der sie bewegenden Probleme, das beträchtliche Maß an Spontaneität und die Reaktionen auf negative Erfahrungen der Vergangenheit, wie Überzentralisierung und ideologischen Konformismus, haben es klar gemacht, daß eine Organisation für soziale Veränderung so beschaffen sein muß, daß sie den heutigen Bedingungen entspricht. Die australischen Kommunisten schlagen eine „Koalition der Linken zur revolutionären Veränderung der Gesellschaft“ vor. Dieser Vorschlag geht davon aus, daß es heute — und wahrscheinlich wird das auch in Zukunft so sein — eine Anzahl von Tendenzen gibt, die in ihrer allgemeinen Orientierung auf eine sozialistische Umwandlung der gegenwärtigen Gesellschaft übereinstimmen, aber in wichtigen Punkten der Ideologie, des Programms und der Organisation verschiedener Meinung sind. Dazu zählen die Kommunisten, die wachsende Linke in der Labour Party, Gewerkschaftsaktivisten, Studenten, Intellektuelle, Anarchisten, Bürgerrechtler usw.“

Eine „Koalition der Linken“ impliziert die verschiedensten Formen von gemeinsamen Aktionen und Zusammenarbeit aller dieser Gruppen, doch nicht nur dieser. Während die bewußten Revolutionäre den Kern jeder Koalition zur radikalen Veränderung des Gesellschaftssystems bilden, sollen andere Kräfte, die sich im allgemeinen auf bestimmte Probleme beschränken — Vietnam, Bürgerfreiheiten, Reform der Sozial- und Gesundheitsfürsorge, des Schulwesens und so weiter —, unterstützt und gegebenenfalls in die „Koalition“ aufgenommen werden. Innerhalb einer solchen „Koalition“ gibt es im Zug der Zusammenarbeit und Aktion natürlich Diskussionen über theoretische, programmatiche und organisatorische Fragen; es gibt auch einen Wettstreit der Meinungen. Nur auf dieser Grundlage kann Einfluß ausgeübt und eine Führung gebildet werden.

Wir orientieren uns daher darauf, daß eine solche „Koalition der Linken“ sich entwickelt und verändert auf Grund der Erfahrungen und der Entwicklung der Lage bis zur Revolution und auch in dieser selbst.

Eine solche „Koalition“, die gegenseitige Achtung, Toleranz und Offenheit zwischen den verschiedenen Gruppen und Parteien voraussetzt, wird eine wichtige Garantie für echte Demokratie in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft der Zukunft sein.“

#### EINHEIT IN DER VIELFALT

Es muß hervorgehoben werden, daß die „Koalition“ (wir haben bisher kein besseres Wort gefunden) nicht im parlamentarischen Sinn zu verstehen und auch keine definitive „organisatorische“ Einheitsplattform ist. Die nächste (wenn auch immer noch nicht sehr nahe) Analogie ist vielleicht die Vietnam-Moratoriums-Bewegung in Australien, an der praktisch alle Linken (und auch manche, die in anderer Hinsicht kaum links zu nennen sind) teilnehmen. Wir haben für das Prinzip gekämpft, daß jeder mitmachen kann und niemand dominiert (weder eine Gruppe noch eine Tendenz). Es gibt allgemeine Hauptziele: Abzug aller amerikanischen, australischen und sonstigen ausländischen Truppen aus Vietnam; Einstellung jeder Hilfe für Saigon und Opposition gegen das Wehrdienstgesetz. Man sucht nach jener allgemeinen Form und Aktion, die in der gegenwärtigen Situation die größte Wirksamkeit hat. Aber weder die Kommunisten noch andere stellen weiterreichende anti-Imperialistische Ziele auf (zum Beispiel Unterstützung der NLF) oder treten für radikalere Aktionsformen ein; Jeder kann „tun das Seine“, sozusagen.

Verwandt damit ist die wachsende Tendenz, die starre, bürokratisch „von oben nach unten“ wirkende Organisation abzulehnen, die dazu tendiert (und darauf abzielt), alle in ein und dasselbe Schema zu pressen. Auch wenn Ziele und Aktionen demokratisch beschlossen werden, wird diese Prozedur von vielen, die nach „Selbstverwaltung“ und spontanem Selbstausdruck streben, abgelehnt. Das müssen die Kommunisten berücksichtigen, sowohl hinsichtlich ihrer eigenen Organisation als auch hinsichtlich einer breiteren Bewegung oder „Koalition“, obwohl wir die Auffassung bekämpfen, wonach überhaupt keine Organisation erforderlich sei.

#### BEGINN EINER NEUEN ENTWICKLUNGSPHASE

Selbst dem Parteitag haben uns die Erfahrungen des Vietnam-Moratoriums im Mai, als Zehntausende in ganz Australien an Kampfdemonstrationen und Straßenbesetzungen teilnahmen, sowie der zunehmende Kampfgeist in den Gewerkschaften und

schein nach genügend Beweise dafür geliefert, daß die Orientierung des Parteitages richtig war, und diese Arbeit entwickelt sich vielversprechend, wie auch unsere so notwendige Arbeit auf theoretischem Gebiet.

Aber es wäre falsch, die Schwierigkeiten zu übersehen. Außer der Apathie und den reaktionären (zum Beispiel rassistischen) Verurteilen, die in Australien weit verbreitet sind, ist die Zersplitterung der Linken besorgniserregend. (Die Spaltung der Partei verschärft die Zersplitterung, und vor allem deshalb ist sie beklagenswert.) Die Zersplitterung ist nicht so stark wie in den Vereinigten Staaten, wo eine an sich vielversprechende Situation so oft entwertet wird durch unnötige Konflikte, die mit unnötiger Härte ausgekämpft oder auf rein fraktioneller Grundlage ohne wirkliche Kommunikation und Toleranz zwischen den Streitenden ausgetragen werden. Auch hier in Australien versuchen verschiedene Gruppen der „Neuen Linken“, Trotzkisten, Maoisten und andere Organisationen (besonders die Friedensbewegung) zu erobern und einigen sich nur von Zeit zu Zeit auf eine unbedingt notwendige Aktion, aber manchmal (namentlich wenn die Lage kompliziert ist) auch auf der Grundlage eines billigen Antikommunismus. In vielen Fällen scheint

die Kommunistische Partei das einzige sichtbare Element der Kohäsion darzustellen; doch eine solche Rolle zu spielen, ohne nach schlechter alter Sitte eine Avantgarde-Position (die selbst eine dominierende Position ist) anzustreben, ist eine komplizierte und anspruchsvolle Aufgabe. Sie erfordert eine klare Haltung und eine prinzipielle, nicht-sektiererische Grundlage für den Wettstreit mit anderen, eine verstärkte Aktivität und größeres Wissen seitens der Kommunisten, die Entwicklung neuer Formen der Parteorganisation, und eine vorurteilslose Einstellung zur Möglichkeit des Auftauchens neuer politischer Formationen. Der Sieg auf dem Parteitag gibt uns eine reale Möglichkeit, diese Aufgabe erfolgreich zu bewältigen.

Die Bedingungen sind von Land zu Land sehr verschieden. Aber es hat den Anschein, daß heute die Revolutionäre auf der ganzen Welt im wesentlichen vor den gleichen theoretischen und praktischen Grundfragen stehen. Wir sind erst ganz am Anfang einer sinnvollen internationalen Diskussion über die neue Entwicklungsphase des Marxismus.

Zeitschriften wie das „Wiener Tagebuch“ haben, wie ich glaube, in diesem Zusammenhang eine wichtige Rolle zu spielen, und ich wünsche dem WTB dabei viel Erfolg. ■

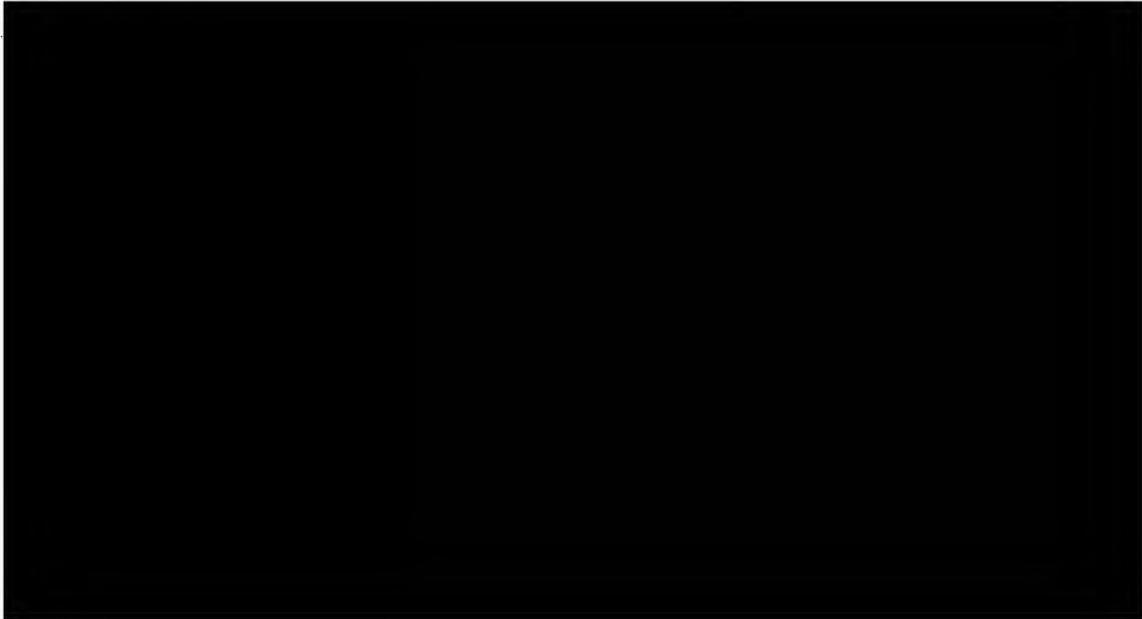
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correspondent for the prestigious leftist London weekly, New Statesman, and is now in charge of all that part of the magazine that deals with Communist affairs."

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April 1971

CUBA: THE SOVIET "MODEL" OF SOCIALISM IN LATIN AMERICA

"In Cuba, as in Eastern Europe, low productivity is not simply a remnant from the past; it persists because the relationship between man and society remains defective, not to say bad. No amount of ultra-revolutionary slogans or socialist enclaves can disguise this fact; indeed, they merely serve to underline the striking contrast between hopes and reality."

This is the essence of post-revolutionary Cuban failures, according to a comprehensive and sympathetic review of Cuba's revolution by K. S. Karol in his recent book, Guerrillas in Power: The Course of the Cuban Revolution.\* This failure, in turn, stems from Castro's 1968 decision -- out of "harsh necessity" -- to embrace Moscow again after a brief but disastrous flirtation with "independent socialism" and Chinese Communism. His embrace meant acceptance of Soviet political, economic, and technical guidance -- in a word, his adoption of the Soviet "model." The decision led Cuba to the same economic stagnancy, bureaucratic inefficiency, and political oppression that has been experienced by all the countries of the Soviet Bloc and most spectacularly, by the Soviet Union at present. The combination of the ignorance and inefficiency of Soviet Bloc advisors and their blindly doctrinaire application of Soviet methods in trade and aid and in the administration of an economy proved disastrous. This is the important conclusion Karol draws from his close personal acquaintance of many years with Cuba and its leaders, so that he is forced to the bitter conclusion: "The chief enemy of Socialism is not U.S. imperialism, but the USSR."

Polish-born Karol was a fervent participant in Soviet Communism until he experienced it first-hand during seven years in the USSR. Still no friend of capitalism (see biographic

\*Published by Hill & Wang, New York, 1970, 624 pp., \$12.50. It appeared earlier, in the spring of 1970, in French as Les guerrilleros au pouvoir: l'itinéraire politique de la révolution cubaine, Robert Laffont, 6, Place Saint-Sulpice, 6, Paris VI<sup>e</sup>.

data in the attached New York Times book review) and severely critical of the United States' role in Cuba, particularly in earlier years up to the heavy Soviet involvement in the 60's, Karol, after several trips to Cuba and interviews with all the top leaders, came to admire their courage but realized, as they did not, that their tangled experiments, following the collapse of Castro's idealistic dream of 1960, would lead to the reality of Soviet client statehood a short ten years later.

A fascinating, impressive, and vastly detailed account of the Cuban experiment, the book itself should be of interest to specialists and historians. Of wider interest would be the account of its recent past and current situation. Thus, the extensive extracts selected for inclusion herewith relate primarily to the evolution of Cuba's relations with the Soviet Union as an object lesson to those, particularly in newly developing nations, who still regard close politico-economic relations with the Soviet Union as a solution to their economic problems.

THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW  
24 January 1971

## Guerrillas in Power

*The Course of the Cuban Revolution.*

By K. S. Karol.

Translated from the French by Arnold Pomerans.  
624 pp. New York: Hill & Wang. \$12.50.

*A former friend of Fidel has let Cuba down*

By LEE LOCKWOOD

On April 22, 1970, Fidel Castro interrupted an oration in Havana marking the centenary of the birth of Lenin and delivered a scathing attack on certain leftist European intellectual critics of Cuba. "These days, as you know, there are super-revolutionary theoreticians, super-leftists, real 'supermen' you might say, who are capable of crushing imperialism in two seconds with their tongues." Those "super-revolutionaries," Castro went on, "construct imaginary, hypothetical worlds from Paris and Rome," while they themselves live in comfort and "haven't the slightest notion of reality or the problems and difficulties of a revolution. . . . they won't even forgive the Soviet Union for existing — and this from positions on the left!"

Although Castro mentioned no names, it was immediately understood, in Paris, Rome and Havana alike that the principal object of his tongue-lashing was K. S. Karol, the noted French journalist. Karol, an intimate of Fidel, had been laboring for three years on a monumental book about Cuba. The first excerpts had just appeared in French leftist journals, and they were not favorable — to say the least.

Castro's vituperative public attack not only assured the book's literary success in Europe, but transformed its publication (in France in April, 1970) into a political event of violent controversy. Among Parisian intellectuals, whether one condemned or defended Karol quickly became the chief criterion of one's "solidarity" with the Cuban Revolution. Important Spanish publishers sympathetic to Cuba (notably Siglo XXI) angrily refused to give it a Spanish edition. And in Havana, writers, bureaucrats and political cadres struggled over smuggled copies of the French edition and begged their American friends to send the English edition as soon as it appeared.

Who is K. S. Karol? American readers may know another of his books, "China: The Other Communism," a serious journalistic account published here in 1967, a book that marked him as a clear, if not uncritical, ideological partisan of Mao Tse-Tung. But other aspects of Karol's biography are also interesting. Born in 1924 in Poland, he was deported to the Soviet Union under the 1939 Partition at the age of 16, studied at the University of Leningrad, and was conscripted into the Red Army during World War II. By his own testimony, he began his sojourn in Russia "enraptured" by the Soviet Communist Party and all it stood for.

Seven years later, disillusioned by the "misery and terror" that characterized Stalinist rule and by his own experiences in Soviet jails, he went first to newly socialist Poland and then, finding Soviet control there no less pervasive and dispiriting, moved on to settle in Paris in 1948. Based in Paris, he has since 1954 been a correspondent for the prestigious leftist London weekly, New Statesman, and is now in charge of "all that part of the magazine that deals with Communist affairs."

Although the Cuban Revolution is unquestionably one of the most interesting political phenomenons of modern times, engendering a colorful literature, there has yet to be published a serious study of it that is satisfactory both in complexity and profundity. Karol, a brilliant scholar with a critical Marxist perspective and wide experience with socialism, would seem to be most qualified to fill that gap. Moreover, he has had the opportunity to come to know Cuba well at firsthand.

Two preliminary visits in 1961 (the first shortly after the Bay of Pigs invasion, during which he had a long followed by lengthy sojourns in 1967, when he met and had long dis-

ussions with Fidel Castro, and again in 1968. Castro was enthusiastic about Karol's project, briefed him personally, arranged similar interviews with other members of the Cuban leadership and opened up the archives of the Revolution to Karol's unlimited scrutiny. No other writer, foreigner or Cuban, has enjoyed such complete access to the confidential files of the Government.

"Guerrillas in Power" is a truly monumental work. Some 600 pages long, it is a curious but artful amalgam of historical narrative, journalistic reportage, political and economic analysis, personal reminiscence, anecdote, rumor and ideological theorizing. Its sheer breadth of scholarship is breathtaking: there seems scarcely a book or newspaper or article or document pertaining to the history of the revolution that Karol has not read and analyzed. The voluminous footnotes alone, sometimes running on for pages, constitute a veritable treasure-trove of bibliographical and historical information about Cuba that has been assembled nowhere else in one book. Moreover, it is admirably written. Such disparate elements as descriptions of trips with Fidel, recapitulations of Soviet economic policy and critiques of revolutionary ideology are held together by Karol's lucid style which is itself the expression of a rigorous, Cartesian intellect.

As its length implies, the book is encyclopedic in scope. One can hardly think of an aspect of the life and times of the Cuban Revolution that is not dealt with — and, what is more remarkable, placed within a theoretical context. That this context is deeply flawed by the overwhelming ideological bias of its author is the book's major — and I believe fatal — shortcoming. Nevertheless, because "Guerrillas in Power" unquestionably yet made by any scholar to locate

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and define the complex Cuba phenomenon in historical time and political space, it deserves to have its virtues — which are many — discussed before its defects.

"Guerrillas in Power" is the best and most complete political history of the Cuban revolutionary process yet published. As Karol notes in his preface, that revolution has undergone a confusing series of "oscillations" (the American edition unaccountably translates this as "vacillations") during its action-packed 12 years. Karol combs out these historical snarls with impressive patience and vigor. The resulting chronicle is a testimonial to the resilience of Castro's revolution which survived, during its first half-decade in power, a succession of potential disasters. These included its own chaos and improvidence in 1959-60; the cancellation of the American sugar quota in late 1960, Cuba's principal and almost sole source of income (Khrushchev picked up most of the deficit, and Cuba became from that moment on a ruble-zone economy); the Bay of Pigs invasion of 1961; the headlong plunge into socialism and romantic idolatry of the Soviet Union, whose two direst consequences were a crash program of industrialization, Soviet style, that ended in failure and waste, and a wracking sectarian power struggle between Cuba's old guard Communist party (P.S.P.) and the 26th of July Movement, that nearly tore the political fabric of Cuba apart; and finally, the Missile Crisis of October, 1962, and its direct consequences.

By 1964, as Karol tells us, Castro stood in the enviable position of being, for the first time, his own master. He had emerged from the nearly disastrous Missile Crisis with his dignity intact, his internal support unified, his ideological appeal to Latin-American revolutionaries sharpened, and his security assured, for in return for Soviet withdrawal of the missiles the United States had promised not to invade Cuba. Moreover Khrushchev had had to pay his own "price" to Castro for having negotiated directly with Kennedy over his head. In material terms this meant underwriting Cuba's economy for the next six years (primarily through steadily increased sugar imports at a sub-

sidy level three times the then current world market price) and unlimited donations of military hardware and material. Politically, it meant ideological "hands-off" Cuba while she attempted to develop her own variant of Marxism-Leninism.

Having survived both the frontal attack of United States invasion and the back-door subversion of Soviet hegemony, Castro set about turning the temporary equilibrium wrought by the impasse between the two super-powers into a state of permanent independence. In the economic sphere, this meant a return to agriculture: sugar in the short run, in incremental steps up to 10 million tons in 1970, but diversification in the longer run. Politically, it meant the institutionalization of the revolution through the formation of a new Cuban Communist party, and the extension of the revolutionary movement to continental South America, led by Che Guevara (planning for which was already under way by early 1965).

Ideologically, it meant the doctrine of "armed struggle" abroad and the "simultaneous construction of socialism and Communism" at home by eradicating the remaining vestiges of capitalism in Cuban society, the shifting from "material" to "moral" incentives for workers, and, in more general terms, the "transformation of consciousness" throughout Cuban society, to culminate, ultimately, in the "building of the 'new man,'" free of egotism and greed and motivated to work and sacrifice for the collective welfare in the true spirit of Marx. It is these two departures from post-Leninist Soviet dogma which Karol lumps together under the phrase, "the Cuban heresy."

Americans are probably at least dimly aware that every one of these hopes, which Karol found still glowingly alive during his long Cuban stay in 1967, had either faded or disappeared by 1970. Castro's sugar program has been a disaster; the 10-million ton harvest of 1970, upon which he staked "the honor of the Revolution," not only fell far short but threw the rest of the Cuban economy so far out of whack that financial stability now seems light-years away. The dream of "two, three, many Vietnams" ended abruptly with

death in 1967 and the program of armed struggle lies abandoned, at least for the foreseeable future.

The new Communist party, whose formation in 1965 Castro hailed as the beginning of true popular democracy in Cuba, has yet to hold its first congress and thus has calcified, despite the best intentions of most of its hard-working members, into another socialist bureaucracy not unlike its predecessors. As for the creation of the "new man," the sad truth is that, to the growing list of unkept promises, the lengthening ration lines for ever-scarcer goods, the steady decline in essential services, and the unmeritorious pattern of economic disorganization and mismanagement, the rank-and-file Cuban, though he has struggled honorably, has begun to respond with lower productivity, rising absenteeism and growing immunity to official exhortations to greater sacrifice.

Karol labors diligently to provide an understanding of the process that has led to this dismal state of affairs. Cuba's economic woes may be ascribed in part to inherited neocolonialist attitudes toward work, to the legacy of Soviet-style centralized planning introduced into Cuba in 1960, as well as to the mercantile straitjacket imposed on Cuba by virtue of having the Soviet Union as her principal trading partner. But in Karol's view, both low worker productivity at the base and the tendency to vastly overambitious planning at the top stem from a common source: Castro's failure to provide popular institutional forms for the direct participation of the masses in making the essential decisions that affect their own lives.

Karol put this thesis to Castro personally in a conversation in 1968 and was told that true participatory institutions would not work well until the masses had reached a sufficient level of "revolutionary consciousness." In Cuba, which never had a strong, class-conscious proletariat, this consciousness must be fostered by the leadership, the revolutionary vanguard, through a "noninstitutional dialogue" with the people. Castro told Karol, Karol finds Castro's faith in the role of the vanguard Elitist and aristocratic,

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small, disruptive of the very sort of political consciousness that Fidel wishes to foster. Though well-intentioned, Fidel is the "victim, not the master" of a process whereby the revolutionary enthusiasm by the masses has slipped from his grasp.

While I find the last judgment overdrawn, Karol's general thesis seems to me correct. The construction of socialism, if it is at all possible, must build upwards from the base, and the responsibility of the leadership to provide the institutional means for this process cannot be postponed until after the material security of the revolution has been guaranteed. This thesis is not original with Karol, even in studies of the Cuban revolution (compare Huberman and Szczyz, René Dumont, et al.), and it seems evident from Castro's recent speeches and activities that he himself is concerned about this problem more than ever. The essential question is how to introduce socialist institutions into a society so totally dependent on and dominated by one man. Karol is quick to point to China as suggesting an alternative. He may be right; certainly, the answer is not available in Eastern Europe. But Fidel is not Mao; furthermore, a Chinese-style cultural revolution on a small island only 90 miles from Key West seems a dubious solution at best.

It is now time to say that "Guerrillas in Power" is not one book but two and that only one of them is about Cuba. If Cuba is the subject of Karol's analysis, the object of his passion is the Soviet Union—and the passion is hatred. For Karol, the history of Castro's revolution is a cautionary tale for all would-be socialist revolutions, the moral of which is that the chief enemy of socialism is not United States imperialism but the U.S.S.R. The Soviet threat comes in two forms: economic exploitation and political manipulation of other revolutions by the inept, power-hungry clique in the Kremlin; and the 'Soviet brand of Communism,' a revisionist doctrine which is foisted upon gullible neophyte socialist leaders like Fidel Castro, to their ultimate undoing.

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Afforded all sounds vaguely Marxist in tone, it is no accident;

Karol devotes long digressions to the vagaries of the Sino-Soviet schism, invariably taking Peking's side. But China is incidental to Karol's theme, which, introduced unobtrusively in the first chapter by a 1961 quotation from Che ("Listen, every revolution, like it or not, has its share of Stalinism") grows in shrillness as the book unfolds and becomes the dominant leitmotif at the end.

The villainy of Nikita Khrushchev, Castro's patron (whom Karol regards as even more unprincipled than Stalin), is the agent of this deformation. Thus, when Khrushchev threatened the United States with retaliation from Soviet rockets if they intervened in Cuba, says Karol, it was all a hoax designed to distract attention from "the magnitude of his defeat" in his anti-Maoist campaign. Two years later, Karol asserts, Khrushchev provoked the Missile Crisis for the sole purpose of forcing the United States to accept his policy of "peaceful coexistence." In order to gain Castro's unwitting complicity, he "lied" to Fidel, telling him that the Yanquis were planning another invasion, and "foisted" the missiles on Cuba. (Here he misquotes an interview with Castro by Claude Julien to support his point.) In reality, Karol concludes, "no United States invasion was being planned and . . . Khrushchev had not the least intention of supporting social uprisings in the Third World."

Perhaps it is academic at this late date to quarrel over who first suggested the installation of nuclear missiles in Cuba. But Castro, though somewhat ambiguous at first, has long since laid the question to clarified rest. For example, he stated to this reviewer in 1965: "Naturally the missiles would not have been sent in the first place if the Soviet Union had not been prepared to send them. But . . . we made the decision at a moment when we thought that concrete measures were necessary to paralyze the aggressiveness of the United States, and we posed this necessity to the Soviet Union."

Moreover, Castro in the same interview went on to say that he had been convinced in 1962 that the United States was planning a new aggression, and was

still convinced of it in 1965. (He had every reason to be; just after the Bay of Pigs, J.F.K. had publicly promised the exiled "revolutionary council" their defeat would be avenged, and the council was still very much in existence in October, 1962.)

Finally, Khrushchev's "lie," as documented by a Karol footnote, turns out to be no lie at all but rather a graphic quotation from a conversation between Adzhubel and Kennedy (a report of which was sent to Castro). In it Kennedy made thinly veiled threats regarding Cuba that were clearly strong enough to provoke the anxiety of another invasion, whether or not one was actually being planned.

Space does not permit a full exposition of the countless ways in which Karol hammers home his hysterical thesis that the Soviets deceived, manipulated and thwarted Cuba and, ultimately, through the powerful influence of their ideology, subverted Castro's revolutionary principles. While this reviewer does not wish to appear a defender of the Soviet Union (indeed, many of Karol's criticisms of Moscow's Cuba policy are, in themselves, valid ones), what I must take issue with is the unmitigated parochialism of his vision of Cuban history, which leads him to distortion and, ultimately, to falsification.

In his concluding chapter "The Reckoning," Karol sees Fidel Castro as having paid for his heresies of 1965-67 with total submission to the Soviet yoke. This period begins with Castro's support of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Karol asserts that Fidel really wanted to denounce the "socialist imperialism" of the U.S.S.R. but lacked the courage to do so because of his reliance on Moscow's aid. Furthermore, Castro's "greatest fear was that too violent upheavals [in the Socialist bloc] might paralyze his allies, and leave Cuba to the mercy of the United States." By 1969, Karol goes on, Castro had embarked on an economic program that "bore a suspicious resemblance to the doctrine of the Soviet Union at the time of forced industrialization and collectivization." In a word: Stalinism. Furthermore, his economy and his

abandoned moral incentives and his other ideological heresies in favor of "primitive socialist accumulation."

At this point, the level of distortion is so high as to beggar discussion. Castro's painful speech on Czechoslovakia, whatever its shortcomings, was primarily an indictment of the Soviet Union's policies and useless to Moscow as an ideological weapon. "Militarization" implies forced conscription,

and "Stalinism" implies purges, assassinations, and totalitarian control of society. None of these are remotely realities in Cuba today. If Castro has temporarily de-emphasized other ambitions to give priority to righting Cuba's desperately faltering economy, that is hardly proof that he has sacrificed his principles—or lost his courage. Indeed, if one puts aside Karol's tendentious interpretations and analyzes only his historical evidence, one

must conclude that the two qualities which give continuity to Castro's revolution and mark him as unique among political leaders have been his adherence to his ideals and his unfaltering courage in defending them through 12 years of adversity. If the problems of the Cuban Revolution still exist in 1971, so do its virtues, a fact which Karol both fully documents and ultimately ignores.

Mr. Lockwood is the author of  
"Castro's Cuba: Cuba's Fidel."

TIME

8 February 1971

## CUBA

### The Mortgaged Island

Fidel Castro last week summoned provincial representatives from all parts of Cuba to an economic accounting in Havana. The *jefe máximo* had bad news for them. Unless the pace of the 1971 *zafra*, or sugar harvest, is stepped up, he warned, considerable amounts of cane will go unprocessed. Said Fidel: "We cannot allow ourselves the luxury of leaving one pound of sugar unexported."

Lately, Cuba's bearded leader seems to be delivering nothing but stern exhortations. Two weeks ago, he wrote to Régis Debray, the French intellectual who was captured shortly before Bolivian soldiers killed Che Guevara in 1967 and was recently released from prison. "We are working hard and facing great difficulties," Castro confessed. "The march is truly long, Debray, because it is when power has been taken that we revolutionaries understand that we are barely starting."

Castro's longtime critics agree that the regime's economy is in serious trouble. Pointing to a severe labor shortage, excessive absenteeism, low productivity and a woeful lack of modern machinery, a U.S. Government analyst said last week: "Something is radically wrong—wrong priorities, wrong emphasis, wrong administration—in short, chaos." Castro admits as much in his speeches. Last year, for example, he told the nation: "Our enemies say that we have problems, and in reality they are right. They say there are irritations, and they are right."

Surprisingly, some of the sharpest criticism of Castro is coming from European leftists who have frequently visited Cuba, talked with him and supported his goals. Polish-born Journalist K.S. Karol, who writes out of Paris for *Le Monde*, *Le Nouvel Observateur* and Britain's *New Statesman*, is one. His *Guerrillas in Power: The Course of the Cuban Revolution* has become required reading for U.S. intelligence and Latin American specialists. French Agronomist René Dumont also faults Castro in his *Cuba: Is It Socialist?*

**Prolonged Sacrifices.** Both authors contend that one of Castro's earliest mistakes was setting up incorrect goals and improper procedures. "An encircled country like Cuba could not permit herself the luxury of gradual prog-

that have been [too] prolonged have become unbearable for the people today," says Dumont.

Karol found *el Caballo*—"the Horse," as the peasants affectionately refer to Castro—personally vibrant. "Fidel finds it difficult to sit still while he speaks. He moves about all the time, gets up, takes a few steps, sits down, stalks back and forth as if every argument were a kind of hand-to-hand struggle with a wily opponent." Castro has spent altogether too much time serving as a national ombudsman, Karol complains, forever touring the country and leaving the government to bureaucrats. "The new proletarian class," reports Karol acidly, "is quite unable to control and use the bureaucracy for its own ends as the bourgeois used to do."

**Costly Crop.** Both observers agree that Castro's greatest error in judgment has been what Karol calls his "sugar obsession." To pay for Russian oil and aid, which is now running at the rate of \$1.5 million a day, Castro called on Cubans to harvest an unheard-of 10 million tons of sugar. The whole island was mobilized for the harvest. Christmas '69 and New Year's Day '70 were postponed until it was finished.

But there was one monstrous miscalculation: Years before, that old harvester Nikita Khrushchev had ordered his experts to design a cane cutter, and 1,000 of the machines were shipped to Cuba. But while the cutters worked adequately when tested in the Ukraine, they failed completely in Cuba. Karol blames it on hilly ground; others maintain that the Russian machinery overheated in tropical weather. Faced with a 1970 avalanche of sugar cane, some 400,000 mostly inexperienced Cubans had to bring in the record crop by hand. Castro himself cut cane instead of administering. Visitors ranging from Soviet Defense Minister Andrei Grechko to the "Venceremos" (We shall overcome) brigade of radical American students went into the canefields. Eventually an estimated 8,500,000 tons were harvested, a commendable record but short of Castro's goal.

Such a harvest, Karol maintains, was more harmful than helpful. Fully 7,000,000 tons of sugar went merely to settle Cuba's accounts with the Soviet Union and other Communist providers. Writes Karol, who was educated at Rostov University, served in the Red Army (and Stalinist prisons) and is virulently anti-

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no moral right to insist on her contractual rights and on the superhuman sacrifices these entail for Cuba." Castro commented angrily to Karol: "They give us nothing for nothing and then act as if they were showering us with gold."

**Tobacco Ration.** Since other work had been abandoned or cut back to bring in the harvest, the 1969-70 *zafra* damaged the rest of the economy. Power is now so short that there are continual brownouts. "Click patrols" of small children have been mobilized to go about turning off unnecessary lights. Cubans routinely face long queues and shortages. In a land famed for its tobacco, Castro warns that smoking is unhealthy and rations his people to two packs of cigarettes and two cigars every week. Rents are cheap, prices are low and, with little available to buy, money is plentiful. The *bolsa negra*, or black market, flourishes as a result. Rum costs 90 pesos a bottle and cigarettes 5 pesos a pack (black-market pesos are seven to the dollar), but there are plenty of buyers. Other Cubans line up outside such Havana restaurants as Monseigneur La Torre and Floridita to spend 40 pesos on dinner for two.

**The Loafer.** Castro has apparently read his critics. He has referred to them as "these little leftist writers" and as people who "build hypothetical, imaginary worlds." At the same time, however, he has been carrying out some of the changes they suggested. One was to allow workers more power of decision. Cuba has held a series of widely publicized trade-union

"elections," in which 2,000,000 workers approved 148,000 union representatives. Supposedly, these representatives will be the channel through which the workers can voice their complaints or make suggestions.

Meanwhile, the government is clamping down on slackers. This year has been designated "the Year of Productivity." New regulations have been introduced against *el vago*, the loafer. Cuban men from 17 to 60 who are chronically absent from work face up to two years on state farms. Women, however, are exempt. "Our people would not understand if we treated men and women alike," explains Labor Minister Jorge Risquet. Meanwhile Castro is weeding his Cabinet of those who, as he puts it, "have worn themselves out" in the revolution. Ominously, each change seems to bring more army officers into civilian Ministries.

Of 20 Ministries, eleven are now run by captains and majors.

No one suggests that Castro will soon be overthrown. Most of those who might have opposed him have left Cuba or hope to do so aboard one of the ten-a-week Varadero-to-Miami flights. Though no new exit permits have been issued since 1966, some 130,000 people who were granted permits before that time are still waiting to join the 600,000 Cubans who have departed for what Castro scornfully calls "the *dolce vita* and the consumer society." What the critics do suggest is that socialist Cuba is in dire trouble. They argue that Castro's charisma has worn thin and that his reliance on Russian aid will not solve his problems. "One wonders," says Karol flailly, "if he has not mortgaged the entire future of the revolution."

EXTRACTS FROM

# Guerrillas in Power

## The Course of the Cuban Revolution

By K. S. Karol

Translated from the French

By Arnold Pomerans

Hill & Wang New York

Russians visiting the island at this point were only too happy to endorse Mayakovsky's view that Cuba was "A country of the happiest prospect," and this time they did not say so tongue in cheek. The poor in Cuba had not yet vanished from the landscape; but they were the first to declare their confidence in the future. The existence of a whole range of light industries seemed to guarantee—with even more certainty than in the U.S.S.R.—a rapid improvement in the standard of living. The richness of the Cuban soil greatly impressed many Soviet visitors: "Here one has only to spit on the ground for something green to pop up," said Timur Gaidar enviously, no doubt thinking of the recalcitrance of his native soil. Havana, with its shops full of the latest gadgets, its streets lined with American cars, its air-conditioned restaurants, and its swimming pools, beaches, and parks, showed the whole world that socialism could go hand in hand with gaiety and still prosper.

To be sure, Cubans intended to modernize their country. Heavy industry would put an end to unemployment and to dependence on imports for basic industrial equipment. Their ambition seemed neither exaggerated nor unrealistic, even though they had virtually no native sources of energy (reserves of petroleum were far too small to meet the country's needs). There was iron in Cuba, as well as nonferrous metals, particularly nickel. Less favored countries such as Japan had become big exporters of finished steel, even though they had to import most of the raw materials. Cuba lacked technicians, but Russia could easily repair this deficiency. After all, the Soviet Union had built gigantic steelworks in India, a country much poorer than Cuba.

A few months after the great nationalization wave of October 1960, things began to take a turn for the worse, and supplies became rather unpredictable. This was clearly the result of the American blockade, but the Castroists, anxious to deny the effectiveness of this "criminal enterprise," preferred to attribute it to cuts in production from the end of 1960 up to the Playa Girón invasion; during all of which time the country had been

in a state of alert. They accordingly continued to see the future through rose-colored glasses, the more so since they could look forward to the benefits of a planned economy. Before 1961, they had looked upon nationalization as a reprisal against American economic aggression, but after April of that year they warmly welcomed a fire free of capitalist waste and the uncertainties of blind competition. Why, for instance, was it necessary for a host of small factories to make different brands of soap and spend ridiculous sums on advertising, when their products were identical in quality? All that advertising did was to make soap too expensive for a large part of the population. Surely it was much more rational to combine these factories into one single *empresa consolidada*,<sup>17</sup> one that could afford to lower the price and hence bring soap within the reach of all Cubans, including the poorest. "This is precisely what socialism means: revolutionary power and planned organization of the economy," the country's new rulers proudly asserted.

Soviet and Czechoslovak experts, who had arrived in great numbers, took care to foster this optimism. Yet their own system of planning was in process of revision at home, and some of the visitors expressed astonishment that no echo of their discussions should have reached Havana to dampen the Cubans' enthusiasm. But there was a good reason for this: the Cubans were still discussing the general principles of planned economy and not the complex practical problems that would have to be solved in due course. When it came to planning, the Cubans were mere beginners, learnedly discussing such topics as the monopoly in foreign trade which, until the summer of 1960, had been left in the hands of a whole number of more or less parasitic private companies. The experts from Eastern Europe were right in contending that, at the stage of development Cuba had reached, some form of planning, however rudimentary, would be a considerable step forward; there would be time enough to point out the dangers lurking behind a rigidly state-controlled economy. Furthermore, the Achilles heel of the Soviet planning system lay in its inability to stimulate agriculture and consumer industries. Now it was just these fields that the Cubans considered their forte: they could produce convincing figures to show that agricultural production had risen markedly since the Revolution. Hence there was good reason to hope that, owing to the particular assets of their country, their overall plans might work equally well. What point was there in discouraging them by talking of problems that had arisen elsewhere and under quite different historical conditions?

Russian and Cuban optimism thus came together and reinforced each other. "Veterans" of Eastern socialism and their young Caribbean disciples vied with one another in making happy forecasts. Cubans already saw themselves enjoying a Swedish standard of life, convinced as they were of Russian generosity and the efficiency of the planning "clock." For the Russians and the Czechs, a socialist country had, and needs immediately to have, a very high growth rate. That, to them, was a dogma forged during the Stalinist era. The two points of view thus combined to predict an imminent "economic miracle" in Cuba. For once, moreover, the conjunction of quite exceptional circumstances seemed to favor a young socialist country, so much so that the planners did not hesitate to assign it truly miraculous objectives.

Early experiences did not confirm these forecasts. The summer of 1961 started off badly: shortages spread to almost all staple products, and reached markets in small quantities and at irregular times. So as not to favor those who did the least work and therefore had the most time to wait for deliveries, every Cuban was registered at a shop and had to make do with what happened to be available. This was rationing, even if no one yet dared to call it by its name.

17. For the *empresas consolidadas* see Che Guevara's collected essays in Laura Gonzales (ed.): *Scritti, Discorsi e Diari di Guerriglia, 1959-1967* (Turin, Einaudi, 1968). See especially pp. 489-505 and 507: *Regolamento Organico della Empresa Consolidada*.

Another astonishing attitude was reflected in the absolute refusal of the delegates to discuss the reason for the fall in quality, or simply in production, in certain branches of industry. When speaking of toothpaste, Che had said nothing about the raw materials, which had come from Poland and were of much poorer quality than those used before by the Procter & Gamble factory. Assuredly, those responsible should have waked up earlier, instead of waiting until the stocks were exhausted; but when all was said-and done,-they-would still-have-produced--"stones in tubes." Even now, seven years later, Cuban toothpaste has an annoying tendency to refuse to come out of its tube. Problems of this type have appeared everywhere, in all factories forced to make do with raw materials that do not meet their technological needs.

The young Minister of Foreign Trade, Major Alberto Mora,<sup>22</sup> nevertheless reminded the conference that few countries in the world were so dependent on imports as Cuba. All the country's products, including even sugar, involved the use of foreign products. Thus a *zafra* of 5 million tons of sugar called for more than \$20 million worth of foreign equipment. "Imports represent about 25 per cent of our GNP and to pay for them, including transport costs and international charges, our exports must reach nearly 33 per cent of our GNP." Now 73.5 per cent of these indispensable imports used to come from the United States, which in return took 74.5 per cent of Cuban exports; the remaining foreign trade was largely with countries in the American orbit, while trade with the East was practically nonexistent. In 1959, immediately after the Revolution, imports from socialist countries still amounted to less than 2 million pesos; in 1960 they reached only 136 million pesos; but in 1961 they quadrupled dramatically to account for more than 580 million pesos. The list of Cuban imports included some 30,000 different products and raw materials—from oil and cotton down to screwdrivers and packing materials. So great a redeployment of trade had never before taken place in so short a time, and Major Mora had every right to cite this fact in mitigation of the errors committed by his ministry. But to hear him speak, one might have thought that everything would be put right again within a few months: Cuban buyers would be able to specify their precise needs and the suppliers in Eastern Europe would deliver everything in perfect order and on the dot. The Major

thus reduced the problem to one of organization, when it was something altogether different.

Economically speaking, Cuba had been part and parcel of the United States, and having cut that tie, the island was forced to graft herself onto a bloc which, apart from being totally different, was already afflicted with its own specific illnesses. The operation would at best have caused a great deal of pain, even if all those concerned had given proof of great foresight and clarity of mind; in the absence of both, either one became a source of enormous waste and disappointments, with wide repercussions on the economic and political relations between the new partners.

Two technical aspects—which, incidentally, were not raised at the August convention—are enough to show the difficulties to which this "grafting" process gave rise. Cuba had virtually no harbor installations and lacked warehouse space for large-scale trade with countries across the Atlantic. Supplies from the United States had normally come by ferryboat from West Palm Beach in Florida or by "sea trains" from New Orleans. Proximity to the source of supplies and frequency of delivery had made it unnecessary for Cubans to invest great sums in harbor facilities. The international port of Cuba had been New Orleans and not Havana.

The number one priority, in these conditions, should logically have been the construction of equipment and buildings for the quick unloading and storing of goods from Europe or Asia. It was no longer possible to expect supplies in small quantities; a ship from China could hardly be expected to spend two months at sea in order to discharge what little edible oil Havana could consume in a day. It had to carry the whole 50,000 tons ordered by the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Trade. Now, it was only just before the arrival of the ship that the consignees realized that so great a quantity of oil had never been brought into their country and that there was nowhere to store it.<sup>23</sup> Solids did not

22. Alberto Mora, the son of one of the martyrs of the attack on the presidential palace in 1957, was one of the youngest ministers in the Cuban government.

23. The soya oil in question was finally put into crude oil tanks which had previously been cleaned. On this subject see Edward Boorstein: *The Economic Transformation of Cuba*, p. 69.

pose the same difficulties, since most could be stockpiled in open. But heat and humidity did not improve the quality of products kept under such conditions.<sup>24</sup>

Later the Cuban authorities alleged that responsibility for these costly mistakes must be laid at the door of the Czech experts who had worked on the development plan. Since Czechoslovakia is landlocked, these men must have simply overlooked the need to set aside money for harbor installations. This story caused much laughter after the event, and was always told as proof of the weakness of economic theories divorced from practical life. True enough; but the plan itself was hatched neither in Prague nor in Moscow. Was it possible that the practical Cubans had been so mesmerized by their Eastern comrades as to forget that their country was an island?

The second "technical" aspect was closely linked with the first: the Cubans ordered raw materials or complete factories from the East in the apparent belief that all products going by the same name must necessarily have identical qualities. No time was taken to get full particulars, no experts were available to test samples. It was only after delivery, when the factory yards were cluttered with raw materials or machines, that people tried to adapt these precious commodities to the specific needs of Cuban industry. Quite often these attempts came to nothing. But the money for the goods could not be refunded, nor could they be returned to the sender.

Similar disappointments cropped up with complete factories, ordered on trust and in a hurry. During one of the regular meetings Che held at his ministry,<sup>25</sup> he admitted that the cannery factory bought in Poland at the then market price employed 270 workers to produce what, in a Western-style factory, could be done by only 25. The Minister of Industry and other leaders were completely taken aback by the technological backwardness of the Eastern bloc, despite the fact that most of them had visited the "continent of marvels." For a long time they even treated as potential counterrevolutionaries all those many technicians who dared to assert that Russian jeeps or trucks looked like twenty-year-old American models, and that Russian tractors were not the equal of the Caterpillars once imported from the North, except on the invoice. Later, when the Cuban leaders were forced to take stock of their early mistakes, they had to admit that their pro-Soviet attitude had prevented them from seeing a truth that was staring them in the face. Unfortunately, many leading Cuban technicians had not waited for this admission, and had left instead to swell the ranks of exiles in Miami.

<sup>24</sup>. It should be added that poor postal communications between Cuba and the Eastern bloc did not make the distribution of these goods any easier. Factories often complained about the nondelivery of raw materials or machines that had been "sun-bathing" in the ports of Havana or Santiago.

<sup>25</sup>. The discussions between Che and his colleagues were taken down and published (in Vol. VI of his works) for the private use of political and economic leaders. I was allowed to examine them but not to take them out. Che's remarks are therefore quoted from memory. The meeting mentioned here took place on July 19, 1962.

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Cuban self-criticism had clear overtones of reproach toward the comrades and friends from Eastern Europe. But the time for polemics had not yet come, nor even for reflection on the fundamental causes of the technological and human failings of Soviet society. On the contrary, there were explanations about the harsh conditions in which the Soviet Union had been forced to develop, isolated and facing a hostile world; that she still could not meet the demands of her huge internal market and hence could not worry too much about the quality of her products. But these explanations had ceased to carry much conviction. How could people believe that Russia was about to overtake the United States, when they had seen Russian engineers staring open-eyed with wonder at American factories in Cuba? Moreover, in their first rapture, the Cubans had signed contracts for the purchase of factories from Eastern Europe in exchange for sugar or on credit.<sup>26</sup> Now, brought up as they had been to make something of a fetish of modern technology, they found it difficult to swallow the idea that they had to pay high prices for things not worth the money. "A developing country,"

<sup>26</sup>. In 1961, Cuba sold to the Soviet Union and its partners 4 million tons of sugar at 3.95 cents per pound and an unspecified quantity of nickel, tobacco, and coffee; 80 per cent of these products were paid for in goods, and the remaining 20 per cent in convertible currency, to allow the Cubans to buy various materials unobtainable in Eastern European markets. Arms deliveries were accounted for separately, and after the missile crisis of October 1962, the Russians stopped demanding payment for them.

<sup>27</sup>. Che Guevara's speech at Algiers (February 1965) in the *Maspero* edition, *op. cit.* p. 265.

Che explained, "must never import obsolete equipment; for this means mortgaging the future and sacrificing long-term needs." True, better than three more years of sad disappointments, especially in politics, were to pass before Che, in a great speech at Algiers, saw fit to criticize Soviet ways of doing foreign trade;<sup>29</sup> but as early as 1962, his remarks at meetings of the Ministry of Industry had begun to betray his profound disillusionment with the U.S.S.R.

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1/5 liter per day for adults, 1 liter per day for children under seven.  
See: Dudley Seers: *Cuba, The Economic and Social Revolution* (University of North Carolina Press, 1964), p. 35.

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In fact, even if they were not personally responsible for all the errors in the planning or direction of the Cuban economy during this period of "socialist takeoff," the missionaries from Eastern Europe had a far greater responsibility than they cared to acknowledge. They brought with them a conception of economic construction that disregards the human (and even economic) cost of accelerated growth. They were so used to waste at home that the fanciful orders or ill-conceived projects of the Cubans hardly shocked them, and certainly not enough to do anything about them in time. How else explain the fact that they allowed orders for outmoded factories to pass without comment, factories for which raw materials were even in short supply? The Cuban buyers in Havana could plead inexperience and protest their absolute confidence in Eastern Europe, but their Soviet or Czech advisers ought surely to have known better, however inadequate their general training may have been.

Collaboration between the Eastern Bloc and Cuba highlighted the defects—and especially the extraordinary clumsiness—of the Soviet economic machine. Quite unexpectedly, it showed how irresponsible the Russians and their allies really could be (sending over raw materials without bothering to find out whether they

were usable; selling manufactured goods totally unfit for the Cuban market, etc.) and how irrational was their method of looking for specific solutions, when what was needed was a thorough study of the basic problem. Thus the Russians set up special sections in their institutes of science, metallurgy, and agricultural science which, with incredible slowness, and at great cost, examined Cuban difficulties as they arose. According to a number of skeptical Cuban observers, the U.S.S.R. would have saved money and trouble if she had bought Cuban sugar with convertible-currency, thus allowing Cuba to satisfy her needs in Western Europe or Canada, instead of investing in expensive research projects that rarely came to anything.

In any case, Eastern aid did not please the Cubans, who began to criticize it more and more openly; nor did it please the Russians, who spent so much money that they had some grounds for alleging that "Caribbean socialism" was positively ruinous. In fact, both parties in this veiled dispute had cause for complaint, though each had the very best intentions in the world. The Cubans could have shown that the goods sold them by Eastern Europe at world market prices were very much inferior to those they could have bought elsewhere. The Russians could have proved with figures that these products cost them more than they charged and that they subsidized the economy of the island twice over: first by giving credit and then by selling high-cost products at a loss. The resulting recriminations, one side shouting "stinginess" and the other "ingratitude" proved a source of constant discord in Russo-Cuban affairs.

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At all events, the mass promotion of the Communist old guard greatly affected Cuba's political climate. It was precisely this fact that constituted the main and the most unpleasant difference between my first and my second stay on the island. In April 1961, the stage had been held by Castro's disciples, most of them young men, who, having just discovered the benefits of socialism, were trying to win one over with arguments that though often lacking in skill were never anything but frank and spontaneous. Three months later the "experts on Marxism-

"Leninism" of the old Communist school had taken over; hence-forward only they had the right to interpret the past and put forward plans for the future. They had a most difficult time of it since, as we saw, it was dogmatic blindness rather than tactical errors that had lost the PSP the support of the Cuban masses in the pre-Castroist era. Moreover, the Communists were well aware of their general unpopularity, and were therefore afraid to trust any but "tried and true" comrades, or members of their own narrow circle. Hence as soon as one of them was given a job in the administration, he would quickly slip in a host of friends, partly for sectarian motives, but mainly because these were the only people on whom he could rely.

The repercussions were particularly ominous in the economic sphere. Excess of originality was assuredly not the Communists' greatest sin: they knew the Soviet tenets on industrial organization by heart and stuck to them through thick and thin. Who ever dared to make the least critical suggestion was treated as a potential enemy or, at best, decried as a simpleton incapable of grasping the deeper profundities of Marxism. Though the Communists were honest—no one to my knowledge has accused them of misappropriating public funds—nobody thought much of their administrative skills. My informants may have had a grudge against them, and I was ready to make allowances for their prejudice, but the countless cases of administrative incompetence they quoted sounded genuine enough. To be sure, no one can say with any certainty that the more rapid promotion of the Castroist rank and file would have made for a better administration. Yet there is little doubt that when the old PSP took charge of Cuban industry, it became an obstacle to all original research on the role of the trade unions and on rank-and-file participation in the control and management of the economy.

Needless to say, the Communists posed an even deadlier threat to intellectual life. To them the Cuban situation was quite intolerable. How could a country that called itself socialist and wished to form an integral part of the Soviet bloc allow ordinary bookshops to display heretical works that were bound to embarrass and offend all the comrades who had rushed over from Eastern Europe to the aid of the Revolution? Quite apart from the works of Trotsky, all the books banned in the Soviet Union—from Doctor Zhivago to Kafka and Joyce—were spread out provocatively for all to see. The occasional blue-jacketed editions

of the Moscow Foreign Publishing House could barely make up for such outrages. And it was the same with the cinema: people lined up to see trashy French and Italian films and obstinately stayed away from Russian masterpieces. And to crown it all, if a film from Eastern Europe happened to be a success, it was most often a Polish one or some other unorthodox production denouncing the evil side of socialism.

And so the Communists asked for a free hand to bring some sort of order into this cultural and ideological jungle. That this task proved inordinately difficult was due not simply to the bad habits of their Americanized fellow-countrymen, but also to the ideological crisis that was then gripping Russia herself. The "good old days" of Zhdanovism were a thing of the past. Edifying works in praise of Soviet heroes had become scarce even in Moscow, where the leading writers had begun to sail into the aberrations of the "personality cult" and, to get past the censors, were penning esoteric works full of allusions incomprehensible to such outsiders as the young Cubans. The other great achievements of "proletarian culture"—from genetics to socialist realism in painting—were faring no better. It was, of course, possible to dig up a few diehards of the old school in Moscow, but their works would have been poor examples to hold up to the new Cuban socialists.

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The public debate on the history and uniqueness of the Cuban Revolution was cut short in much the same way. Here, too, the old guard wanted at any cost to force the facts into the classical mold, no matter how reluctant the facts or those who had participated in them. Oddly enough, Fidel Castro raised no objections, even though the PSP's version of recent events was an indirect criticism, not so much of him personally—for

\* PSP — Partida Socialista Popular  
(Popular Socialist Party)  
predecessor of the Cuban  
Communist Party

that was still unthinkable—as of his revolutionary activities. Rumor even had it that Fidel had summoned his old Sierra companions one by one to tell them: "Dear Jorge, or Pablo, or Jesús, you fought well in the guerrilla war and your revolutionary spirit is beyond question; but you must admit that you are really neither a politician nor a soldier. You must learn to be one or the other; only then can I give you an important job in the Party or the army, or wherever you wish." Jorge or Pablo or Jesús were thus forced to choose between enrolling in the School for Revolutionary Education or in the military academy, both of which were completely under the thumb of the PSP. In both, Sierra veterans were taught that the front line of the anti-Batista struggle had been manned by the workers in the factories, under the leadership of the PSP. Thanks to them, and to them only, the *guerrilleros* had been able to outflank the enemy. And so the Cuban, like all other socialist revolutions, once again bore witness to the decisive role of the working class and its vanguard, the Communist Party.

Details in support of this audacious version of history were produced. While Communist victims of Batista's repression were held up as great leaders, martyrs from other movements were allowed to sink into oblivion, as if their deaths had been quite accidental. There was even a black joke going around Havana that the *Granma* expedition had really been led by Blas Roca who, for security reasons, had decided to put on a false beard and call himself Fidel Castro.

But these jokes had ceased to make anyone laugh, and I myself had the distinct impression that Cuba was rapidly being turned into a Stalinist quagmire. My Cuban friends, on the other hand, though apprehensive about what was happening around them, declared that Fidel had absolutely nothing to do with it. To me, their complete trust in the man from the Sierra seemed a bit sentimental. Castro must have known full well what was happening; after all he still traveled all over the country and spoke to all sorts of people. One cannot suppose that he knew less about current developments than myself, a mere visitor, almost a holiday-maker.

I was deeply pessimistic on leaving Cuba, certain that all these mini-Stalinist aberrations were taking place with Fidel's full knowledge, and that he would not be able to set things right even if he wanted to. I felt that Cuba was taking the easiest road downhill, faithfully copying the Soviet method of running

economy, police, information services, and even intellectual life. Enthusiastic speeches in praise of the superior morality of Soviet society had made way for blind imitation of the Russian example, despite storm signals that even Soviet sympathizers were quick to discern.

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Ever since 1962, President Dörricos went on to remark sardonically, Russians have spoken less and less of Communism and more and more about profits and the restoration of market mechanisms. He repeated Che's criticism and added that some theorists in the East were trying to use the new reforms as a justification of perpetual socialism. For them, socialism was not simply a halfway house between capitalism and Communism, as Marx and Lenin had claimed, but a third system with its own mode of production and thereby capable of permanent survival. How could the Russians possibly justify this bizarre conclusion? Could they still invoke capitalist encirclement? Did one really have to wait for the age of abundance before changing social relationships in the U.S.S.R.? That is precisely what the Russians claimed, and to men like Che & Dörricos their arguments sounded so unconvincing that they began to suspect the Soviet Union had turned into just another oppressive society which though socialist in name had completely failed to live up to the great promises of its revolutionary founders.

True, the Cubans kept these thoughts to themselves and, Dörricos added, many of them even refused to admit the possibility that Communism might forever elude the land of the October Revolution. But the Eastern bloc had obviously lost interest in revolutionary ideas; genuine Marxists were now asking themselves new questions about the real nature of Soviet society. For a revolutionary country like Cuba, this was no mere academic problem. Cuba must in no way be caught in the same trap. It was for that very reason that Cubans had gone back to the fundamental teachings of Marx in the hope of discovering possible remedies and solutions.

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[Castro] He often wondered why the Bolsheviks had not run the same risks; why they had allowed the Hungarian Communists and the German Spartacists to be crushed. I was deeply moved by his passion, but remarked that there had been at least one Russian attempt to export the revolution, and that it had ended in abysmal failure. In 1920 the Red Army had drawn up before the gates of Warsaw, and the Polish proletariat had not bid it welcome. It was essential to draw the lesson of this failure. Namely that the Red Army was essentially a peasant force and its such ill-prepared to carry the flag of revolution across the European continent.

Fidel sat quite still, perhaps mulling it all over before making a reply. One of the officers prodded from the silence: "The War saw fiasco was Stalin's fault." Fidel quickly took the cue. To him, too, Stalin was the very embodiment of evil; he assured me that even Khrushchev—no great internationalist—had things about Stalin that he would never have believed had they not come from the mouth of a Soviet leader.

"But then Khrushchev is not the most reliable of witnesses," I objected. "He was simply trying to save himself, and with him the whole Stalinist system. By blaming everything on one man, he was saved the bother of looking for the real roots of the evil." The silence that greeted my remarks told me that I had not made myself clear, and that I was being mistaken for an apologist of Stalin. So I quickly added that no one born in Poland, like myself, could have the slightest sympathy for the former Soviet leader. In 1937-38, he had exterminated the entire leadership of the Polish Communist Party and had ordered the Party itself to be expelled from the Comintern (the only case of its kind).

Fidel was appalled and took some time to recover from the shock. "But why ever did he do that? It really is monstrous." He kept repeating this phrase three or four times, raising his hands in obvious horror, overcome with indignation. Just then a tropical storm broke, and Fidel's exclamations were punctuated by thunder claps. He rose to make himself heard, his gigantic silhouette dominating this curious birthday meal.

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I asked if Cuba's material dependence on the U.S.S.R. did not severely hamper its freedom of expression and hence the revolutionary education of Cuban and Latin American youth. He said no, he did not have to make too many concessions, and Cuban dependence on Russia was more temporary than most people believed. "In one or two years' time we shall be able to look after ourselves; our exports will have become so diversified that we shall no longer be tied to a single market or a particular supplier. Meanwhile, our young people know what they have to do, even if we avoid an open clash with the Russians. We are not building socialism in complete silence as you may have come to think; we have our own way of explaining ourselves, and who knows but that Latin American Communists may listen to us as well!"

Did he really believe that all those who had participated in the OLAS Conference would eventually take the fundamental path of the guerrilla movement? He was not dogmatic, but seemed optimistic. In his view, it did not matter whether they themselves took the path of revolution, so long as they placed no obstacles on it. "In Latin America, you see, all that is needed is a detonator; once it has gone off, the explosion will be so violent that not even armchair theorists will be able to keep out of the battle." We parted on these words. I left for Havana, he and his colleagues for a tour of the Isle of Pines, the workshop of Cuban Communism.

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In these circumstances, how could he possibly be thinking of a still larger harvest? Fidel's answer was that the grave problem of mechanization was about to be solved with Soviet help: "The Soviet government, and more particularly Comrade Khrushchev, have evinced special interest in this problem. Khrushchev has a great deal of experience in agriculture. He has a distinguished service record as First Party Secretary in the Ukraine, an agricultural region, and he has done a great deal of fighting in that area. After the Germans left, he reorganized the economy and agriculture of the Ukraine, which explains his extraordinary intimacy with agricultural questions and his

knowledge of machines. And, remarkably enough, using what information he had on sugar cane and everything pertaining to it, Comrade Khrushchev was able to list the ideal characteristics of a machine for cutting and harvesting cane sugar. Everything in a single machine: cutter and reaper combined. And from that moment, there was never the least doubt that the problem would be solved technically. Immediate contact was made with the Ministry of Machine Construction and with agricultural engineers; a study group was formed on the spot, led by one of Khrushchev's personal assistants, a specialist in agriculture, who just came to Cuba with urgent instructions to construct that machine. Khrushchev himself has contributed a series of new ideas about the nature of this machine and these will prove extremely useful to technicians, engineers, and specialists. . . . In short, we have decided on the complete mechanization of the cane sugar harvest in Cuba."<sup>17</sup>

Next day, every Cuban paper proudly announced that, thanks to Soviet cane-cutting machines, Cuba was about to be delivered, once and for all, from her annual nightmare. And, in fact, the Russians shipped one thousand of Khrushchev's machines to Cuba all at once, so convinced of Khrushchev's foresight that they did not even bother to make preliminary tests in the field. Unfortunately they were mistaken. In Cuba, unlike the Ukraine, the ground is not perfectly flat, and the cane will not send up fresh shoots unless it has been cut in a special way. And Khrushchev's machine was too heavy, too clumsy, and quite unsuited to Cuban conditions. In other words, it caused nothing but damage: "It is a great destroyer; where it has been nothing will grow for a long time to come. . . ."<sup>18</sup>

True, when he decided to give absolute priority to sugar production, Fidel still had faith in the fabulous Khrushchev machine, and was therefore entitled to think that his experts in the Ministry of Agriculture had taken an overoptimistic view of the cost involved. Moreover, once the plan had been put into operation it was probably difficult to revoke it, for political no less than for economic reasons.

Nor should it be forgotten that investment in the 10-million-ton *zafra* would serve Cuba for many years to come. The Cubans have already increased the potential of their sugar refineries by 43 per cent; they have reorganized the ports of Matanzas, Cienfuegos, and Guayabal (in Camagüey), where an annual 6 million tons of bulk sugar can now be loaded straight onto ships; they have built new railway lines, roads, depots, repair-shops—and they have spent \$465 million on fertilizing, irrigating, and otherwise improving. All this will remain, as will the bulldozers and heavy tractors supplied by Richard-Continental of Lyon for the nice round figure of \$36 million (largely on credit), and the large fertilizer plant in Cienfuegos constructed by Britain for \$60 million. The list of other investments is too long to include here; the Cubans have never disguised the fact that during the past few years they have been importing vast quantities of equipment from the convertible currency zone, almost exclusively for the sugar industry. This is what Fidel himself had to say on the subject: "We know perfectly well that we are short of many things. We know what the men and women of this country would like to buy. Nevertheless, during the coming years, we must confine investment to the essentials, and that means buying new machines. This is our guarantee of future abundance."<sup>19</sup>

But will a successful ten-million-ton *zafra*, in fact, ensure this great leap from austerity to relative abundance? Three quarters of the output is contractually earmarked for the Eastern bloc, and the two to three million tons left over for the free market are not enough to pay Cuba's debts in other parts of the world. The balance of payments with these countries was already in deficit to the tune of almost \$100 million in 1967 (exports: \$166 million; imports: \$262 million); and since then the import

<sup>17</sup> Fidel Castro speech of June 1963, as published in *Otro Revolucionario*, No. 3, 1958, Havana, p. 37.

<sup>18</sup> Fidel Castro never again referred to Khrushchev's machine, but during a meeting on July 14, 1960, at the start of the ten-million-ton *zafra* he explained: "Cane is a very awkward plant; it does not grow straight like maize or rice. Cane lies down, particularly when its sugar content is high. Once the yield of a cane plantation exceeds 85 tons per hectare, the slightest wind will bend the cane over and mix it all up; to cut it on the ground, one must search for it among the leaves. Designing a machine that can lift the cane, cut it and strip the leaves is therefore an exceedingly difficult task." See *Grenada*, French weekly summary, July 20, 1969.

<sup>19</sup> 22. Fidel Castro's speech of March 13, 1968.

of Western equipment has been stepped up considerably.<sup>23</sup> As the crucial *zajta* approaches, hard currency imports for the sugar industry grow bigger and bigger; even if there were an increase in world sugar prices, it would take Cuba several years to pay her creditors.

The reader might wonder why we have failed to include the 660 million pesos Russia will be paying for its share of the giant *zajta*. This raises a most interesting point. During his negotiations with Fidel in Moscow, Khrushchev told him: "Don't worry, we won't cheat you."<sup>24</sup> And, in fact, Russia agreed to pay Cuba what, at the time, was a very fair price for her sugar. However, from the outset many observers have expressed disquiet at the fact that, in order to meet her obligations to the U.S.S.R., Cuba should be forced to change her meager dollar reserves into rubles. For this is what is happening—in order to earn these rubles, Cuba has to invest vast amounts of hard currency in new plants and machinery.

23. The O.E.C.E. statistics from which we have taken these figures are not up to date, and we are still awaiting complete records for the years 1968-69. But a few examples may serve to illustrate the general trend of Cuban purchases in the West. In 1967 total imports from France were \$14.59 million, but in 1968 Richard-Continental alone supplied bulldozers and tractors worth \$36 million. In addition, the Cubans have bought 1000 Berliet trucks at \$25 million, and water pumps from Richier Benoit-Alta Pomp for a very large (but unspecified) amount. The same trend is apparent in trade with Great Britain, which sold Cuba goods worth \$21.58 million in 1967; in 1968 Simons Carver began to build a chemical fertilizer plant which alone is worth \$60 million. At the same time, British deliveries of irrigation equipment have gone up by leaps and bounds.

24. "No vamos a engañarles." See Fidel Castro's speech of January 24, 1964.

to fulfill its statutory duty of convoking a national congress. All its organs, from the Central Committee down to the lowest office, are appointed from the top by Fidel Castro and his closest collaborators.<sup>60</sup> Admittedly, workers are invited to Party meetings, and can even recommend candidates for membership of the Cuban Communist Party. The final decision, however, rests with the officials and the rank and file has, at most, a consultative voice. The published facts on the present composition of the Cuban Communist Party are, moreover, far too imprecise for any outsider to tell the relative proportion of "recommended" and co-opted members.<sup>61</sup>

Some people have alleged that Fidel Castro has deliberately lulled Cuban political life to sleep; that he has introduced a vertical power structure for the sole purpose of assuaging his own political appetite. I, for my part, am convinced that the present situation has resulted from a process that completely escaped his control. Fidel is its victim, not its master. He would dearly have loved to conserve "the enthusiastic momentum of the heroic phase of the Revolution" by the "disciplined participation of all." He has expelled all sectarians who blunted the enthusiasm of the masses, together with all those who placed too much reliance on it. He has chosen a most demanding way of life for himself, rushing all over the country, explaining here, trying to keep up flagging spirits there, and preaching the virtues of disciplined action wherever he goes. But his achievements in the field are rather slim, especially compared with the tremendous effort he has put into them. The enthusiasm he kindles whenever he appears vanishes again soon after he leaves, and does not stand the test of the setbacks and hard realities of daily life. The discipline he tries to encourage is evanescent, and how, indeed, could it be otherwise in the absence of genuine discussions or any degree of real understanding? Worse still, many of his own interventions and decisions, made on the

Cuban political life has thus been cut back to its most rudimentary form. There is no hypocrisy on this subject in Havana where, in contrast to Moscow, foreign visitors are not subjected to painful discussions about the superiority of the socialist method of elections over those employed in formally democratic countries. In Cuba, no one is elected, or ever pretends to be. Even the Communist Party has not yet felt it necessary

60. Fidel announced the composition of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party on October 3, 1965. One day later came news of the composition of the Political Bureau (Fidel and Raúl Castro, Doríos, Hart, Almeida, Ramiro Valdés, Guillermo García, and Sergio del Valle) and of the Secretariat (Fidel and Raúl Castro, Doríos, Blas Roca, Faust Chomón, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez).

61. According to official figures, the CCP has a total membership of 78,000, with about 11,500 in Havana province.

Cuba, during the first years after the Revolution, with "certain administrative systems and certain forms of organization heavily infected with bureaucratism."<sup>63</sup> But its authors went much further than that. They declared that the bureaucrats, who in a capitalist state are a mere byproduct of nationalization and mergers, have a distinct tendency, after a socialist revolution, to transform themselves into an autonomous class with special economic and political objectives. Che Guevara had written as early as 1963: "In a capitalist society, in which the entire state apparatus is in the service of the bourgeoisie, the importance of the bureaucracy as an independent organism is minimal. . . . it is sufficiently permeable to allow the passage of profiteers and sufficiently tight to catch the people in its net. But, after the triumph of the revolution, the evil of bureaucracy begins to proliferate mightily."<sup>64</sup>

In other words, Cubans had come to appreciate that popular rule—or if you prefer it, the new proletarian upper class—is quite unable to control and use the bureaucracy for its own ends, in the way the bourgeoisie used to do. Under socialism, bureaucracy becomes an autonomous social force that poses a grave threat to the development of revolutionary society. "Bureaucracy engenders bureaucracy"; "Bureaucracy acts as a brake on revolutionary action"; "Bureaucratization causes even greater damage than imperialism because it corrupts from within, attacking everything that is healthy and stable among the masses"; "Bureaucratic practices discourage the workers, sap their morale, and shake their confidence in the revolution"; "What could be more demoralizing for a worker or a peasant than to see problems he understands and is able to solve perfectly well by himself remain unsolved or botched up by bureaucratic officials?" As these quotations show, the Cuban champions of the fight against bureaucracy did not mince words.

"*Our* of the moment, show a great deal of confusion and do anything but alleviate the most pressing problems. A single person cannot be an infallible expert in all fields of technical endeavor, cannot be competent on questions of cattle breeding and irrigation, on the best method of cutting sugar cane and on the advantages of coffee plantations in the *Cordón de la Habana*, to mention a thousand other spheres calling for special knowledge of the soil and of the political realities.

This is the point: the building of socialism cannot be the business of one man or of a single group of men, however well-intentioned. If the socialist ship is to come safely into harbor, everyone ~~else~~<sup>must</sup> take to his oars—a few men rowing up in front are not enough. This may sound like a slogan, but socialist democracy is not the kind of luxury people can only afford when everything else has been settled. Unless everyone pulls his weight, the leaders no less than the workers are exposed to an intolerable strain. In such circumstances, it matters little that great sacrifices no longer serve to enrich a minority of privileged people, or that the leaders are men of high integrity—and no one can say otherwise of the Castroists. The result is bound to be apathy and a general flagging of political interest. Despite his eternal and proverbial optimism, Fidel cannot ignore these truths. Yet during all these difficult years, he has shown a marked preference for partial remedies, for remedies that do not involve a basic revision of the whole system. In

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1967, well before attacking the small traders and the profiteers, he sailed into civil servants, many of whom he had chosen personally, but who had apparently ceased to play their full part in his great socialist project. At the time, an impressive anti-bureaucratic dossier was published in Havana, and the people were called upon to do "battle against bureaucracy." This battle, they were told, was as decisive as the one they had already waged against underdevelopment.<sup>65</sup> The dossier caused quite a stir abroad. It blamed European socialist countries for saddling

63. See *Contro il burocratismo una battaglia decisiva* (op. cit.), p. 27.  
64. See Ernesto Che Guevara: "Contra la Burocracia," in *Cuba Socialista*, No. 18, February 1963.

Personally, I had no difficulty in following him when, pacing about his freezing room, he explained with great feeling that, as far as the Cuban leaders were concerned, the real difficulties only began after the seizure of power. Socialist revolutions everywhere had always had the misfortune of starting in places without the material basis for socialist reconstruction. Lenin and Mao had come face to face with this problem long before him. Once the revolution has been made, the question of "Should we have made it?" is, of course, purely academic. The only real problem is the best method of clearing away the enormous obstacles on the path to full socialism. How, with whom, and for whose sake must revolutionaries run a society that refuses to live in the old way, but is not yet ripe for socialist self-management?

When I put this question to Fidel, he replied in a way that, though far from being "classical," was, in fact, much less heterodox and original than he apparently believed. The revolutionary leadership, he said, must fulfill two parallel tasks: it must create the material basis for socialism and it must foster the political consciousness of the masses. And it must pursue these two tasks simultaneously, simply because they are inseparable. Whenever it can, it must give priority to the development of political consciousness. It must also develop its noninstitutional dialogue with the people, because it has no interests beyond their defense. This, he admitted, might not be the best formulation, but every thing would have been much simpler if Cuba had had a powerful and class-conscious working class. In its absence, any attempt to organize relations between the rank and file and the leadership on pseudodemocratic lines would have had disastrous consequences. Fidel said that he did not like the fig leaves European socialist countries put on to hide their democratic nakedness. He told me how surprised and amused he was in 1960, when Eastern leaders whom he met at the United Nations urged him to hold "popular" elections. These men behaved for all the world like good American democrats, but with this difference: their idea of democratic elections was a single government slate which would receive 99.99 per cent of the votes cast, in accordance with socialist ritual. Fidel roared with laughter as he recalled the anxious faces of Gomulka and Novotny, who could not fathom why the stupid Cubans chose to scorn this beautiful democratic façade. The conscience of the world would have been appeased, and the socialist bloc would have found it much easier to defend Cuba against her detractors. But Cuba, Fidel said emphatically, would never lend herself to this kind of comedy; her people simply would not stand for it. In fact, they were not

even bothered about holding any kind of elections; the very word had become discredited on the island. Once the nation as a whole had attained the level of consciousness of its vanguard, it would be time enough to change the prevailing power structure, and many other things as well. "Do you know how many true revolutionaries we have in Cuba today?" Fidel asked me, smiling with satisfaction. "Somewhere near 50 per cent of the entire population." And he sat down and left me to draw my own conclusion: since Cuba had gone halfway toward proletarian democracy in so short a time, his plans for the future should not be thought too Utopian.

In fact, this was not the conclusion I myself drew from my Cuban experiences, and I wondered if Fidel was not deluding himself about the real state of his country. I did not, of course, dare to put it as bluntly as that, and I considered making my point by oblique references to the Russian precedent. But I quickly realized that I would get nowhere by doing that; there was nothing Fidel liked less than comparisons between the Russia of yesterday and the Cuba of today. He would certainly blow up at me if I told him that his thesis bore a suspicious resemblance to Soviet theory at the time of the great industrialization campaign. In the U.S.S.R., too, they had said: Let us first create the material foundations and build up a socialist mentality; the rest will follow by itself. For men of Fidel's background, who had only discovered the Soviet Union after Stalin's death, the U.S.S.R. was a country of doddering bureaucrats who had nothing but "rubles in their heads." The Cuban leaders failed to appreciate that the U.S.S.R., too, had once had a revolutionary vanguard, composed of devoted and dynamic men who were not simply tools of the Stalinist terror. Dneprostroy, Magnitogorsk, Komsomolsk, are monuments to the greatness and devotion of that vanguard. If, despite all that, the U.S.S.R. has failed to become a proletarian democracy, it is doubtless because the economic effort of a vanguard commanded from on high cannot inspire a whole country, let alone lead it forward to socialism. But this was too complex a bit of history to be used for scoring points against a seasoned debater like Fidel.

It was purely by chance that news of Prague's "new course" first reached Havana on January 6, the day on which I had breakfast with Fidel Castro and his brother Raúl. At the time, we exchanged a few generalities about the problems of Czechoslovakia, formerly the most highly industrialized country in that part of Europe, and the one richest in left-wing traditions. The name of Alexander Dubček, the new leader of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, meant nothing to any of us, nor could we tell what forces had helped him to oust his formidable predecessor, Novotny, head of the Party machine and in charge of the police. On the subject of Novotny the two Castro brothers had a great deal to say. For them, the man was the very incarnation of clinical mediocrity; they claimed that no country had swindled revolutionary Cuba as brazenly as Novotny's Czechoslovakia. Though they did not know Dubček personally, they were convinced that he could not be worse than his predecessor. Until 1968, Czechoslovak affairs did not attract much attention in the Cuban press. The changes in Prague had not seemed sufficiently dramatic for anyone in Havana to get excited about. Only by the spring of 1968, when all Eastern Europe was humming with reports about Dubček's "new course," did *Granma* at last sit up and take notice. It did so with a degree of impartiality worthy of a Solomon, publishing attacks by the orthodox in Moscow, Pankow, and Warsaw side by side with explanations from Prague and Bratislava. On August 22, replying to an article that had appeared ten days earlier in Bratislava and had taken the Cubans to task for their neutrality, the Castroist mouthpiece countered with: "We have published all documents submitted to us by socialist press agencies, so that our people may know the different arguments before forming their own opinion on the Czechoslovak situation." Thus, the only official Cuban statement on the matter, ended with the solemn declaration that Cuba would not allow anyone to "poison her friendly relationship with the people of Czechoslovakia."

8. On July 23, 1968, the Slovak paper *Pravda* published an article by Pavol Jurík, who contended that the Soviet Union was far more patient with Cuba than she was with Czechoslovakia and that the Cubans were wrong not to endorse Dubcek's "new course." The article was therefore incoherent and its author confused: he found the Cubans "unjust and ungrateful toward the Soviet Union," but at the same time urged them to fall in behind Dubcek's "ideas and his truths." *Granma* reproduced the text of this article, called it insidious, and replied with the lead editorial from which I have been quoting. See French weekly summary of *Granma*, August 11, 1968.

Having been invited to form their own opinion, the Cubans, like the rest of the world, were stupefied by the Soviet aggression of August 21, 1968. Clearly, none of their leaders had anticipated that sort of solution, so brutal a termination of what had apparently begun as a friendly debate between comrades. Preserving its habitual sang-froid, the Cuban press contented itself, once again, with making a great show of impartiality. It published an obscure Soviet communiqué claiming that the Warsaw Pact countries had been called in by a number of important but anonymous comrades in Prague, anxious to check the counterrevolution, side by side with precise declarations by the Czechoslovak Communist Party and Parliament affirming that there had been no counterrevolutionary threat nor any appeal for help from anyone, and that their country had been the victim of downright foreign intervention. In the absence of special directions to the contrary, the Cuban reader was naturally inclined to believe the Czechoslovak version and to sympathize unthinkingly with the unfortunate people of that country. Not surprisingly, therefore, Czech technicians in Havana were showered with solicitations and, greatly encouraged by this show of solidarity, they marched in procession through the streets in Vedado, shouting, "*Patria o muerte!*" The radio announced that Fidel would address the nation on August 23 at 9 P.M.

He did this at a particularly dramatic moment. Havana was still without news of Dubček or Smrkovský, Černik or the other leaders, all of them arrested and taken to an unknown destination. The Czech Communist Party was holding a clandestine meeting in a factory on the outskirts of Prague and, while advising the people to stay calm, was considering the possibility of calling a general protest strike. At the same time it appealed for solidarity from Communists throughout the world—solidarity for a socialist victim of Soviet folly.

In the circumstances, it looked very much as if Fidel was making such haste in addressing the nation because he wanted to be among the first to heed this pathetic appeal. So convinced were most Cubans that he would do just that, that they behaved as if their leader had already condemned the U.S.S.R., as if the only remaining question was how hard he would hit out. That evening I was dining with a group of high Cuban officials on a brief stay in Europe. They insisted that all of us stay up for the actual speech, due to be broadcast at 3 A.M. European time, because that speech would open a new page in the history of the international labor movement.

Today everyone knows that if Fidel was anxious to speak that night, it was merely to stem the anti-Soviet mood of his party and people. Having sown doubts on the revolutionary credibility of the U.S.S.R. for so many years, he was appealing to a people with little love for the Soviet Union and none of the pro-Russian mysticism of more orthodox Communists. He was also addressing a nation with a maximum concern for national independence, for the sovereignty of small countries, one that could not but feel the strongest bonds of friendship with the fourteen million Czechs and Slovaks overcome by the Soviet colossus and its four acolytes.<sup>9</sup> And so Fidel had an exceedingly difficult task to convince them. While outsiders called his speech a manifestation of "revolting cynicism,"<sup>10</sup> many Cubans thought it the most pathetic and lamented performance of his entire life.

As a good lawyer, Fidel declared straight away that the Soviet alibi was worthless—Czechoslovak sovereignty had been violated without even a shred of legal justification. And he went on to say: "An entire nation has been exposed to the truly traumatic situation of foreign occupation, albeit by socialist armies. Millions of people have been placed before this tragic alternative: they must either remain passive in the face of circumstances that recall certain episodes of the past, or else they must make common cause with pro-Yankee spies and agents, and with other enemies of socialism."<sup>11</sup>

A wrong had been done to Czechoslovakia, but according to Fidel, it was only to prevent an even greater evil. "Czechoslovakia," he said, "had been marching inexorably toward capitalism, toward imperialism." And the whole trouble had apparently started with those bourgeois economic reforms which, though admittedly imported from the Soviet Union, had been applied so energetically by Prague as to undermine the whole socialist sys-

tem—to the great delight of the imperialists. "Whatever earns quite naturally makes me suspicious." And he went on to quote extracts from the West German and American press, all praising Czechoslovakia's new course. The main trouble had been that

9. All the countries of the Warsaw Pact, with the exception of Romania and, of course, of Czechoslovakia herself, took part in the invasion. "They now stand on Czechoslovak soil."

10. See editorial in *Le Monde*, August 25, 1968.

11. All the quotations are taken from a pamphlet entitled "Address by Comandante Fidel Castro on the events in Czechoslovakia," Instituto del Libro, Havana, 1968, and also from the French weekly summary of *Granma*, October 25, 1968.

the Czechoslovak Communist Party, under pressure from intellectuals and other liberals, had forsaken the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In these tragic circumstances, the Soviet Union could not possibly sit by and do nothing while the imperialists snatched so valuable a prize from the socialist camp. To do so would have been highly prejudicial to the interests of the world revolutionairy movement. Hence, Fidel concluded, the socialist bloc had been forced to violate international law, but in the name of "law even more sacred to all true Communists," namely "the people's struggle against imperialism." After this shrewd assessment of the Czechoslovak affair, the Cuban leader went on to declare that he would profit from the occasion to tell the Soviet Union "a few basic truths that I have been keeping to myself." And he followed with a diatribe against the "weakening and softening of the revolutionary spirit" in Eastern Europe, against "indifference to, and ignorance of, the problems of the underdeveloped world," and the "tendency to favor commercial practices reminiscent of advanced capitalist countries." Fidel now asked the Soviet Union to put an end to all these anomalies, and to make an unequivocal promise that she would henceforth come to the aid of any member of the socialist community above all the most exposed among them: Vietnam, Cuba, and North Korea. He, for his part, was satisfied that Moscow had come to see the "vanity of all idyllic hopes to improve relations with the imperialist government of the United States," and that the Soviet Union would cease to engage in "bourgeois economic reforms which had had such disastrous effects in Czechoslovakia."

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This was hardly idyllic, but then Fidel Castro had not chosen the Soviet Union out of love. His dislike of its politics, which he had confessed to me on more than one occasion, could not possibly have been changed—except for the worse—by the Russian reaction to Czechoslovakia's "new course." He may have told his people that, after Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union would tally more strongly to the cause of international socialism, but that he himself entertained this hope seems doubtful.

In fact, Castro's own reaction to the invasion was dictated primarily by political considerations. He believed that Cuba would enjoy greater protection through continued membership in the Soviet bloc—however "reformist"—than by strict adherence to the principle of sovereignty for small countries. "We must learn to face the political realities, and not give way to romantic and unrealistic dreams," he said in his speech. And, clearly, the division of the world was a much more tangible reality than any number of solemn declarations by the United Nations on the inviolability of frontiers and universal peace. The fate of Czechoslovakia following so close as it did on the heels of Vietnam and of so many other acts of aggression, sufficed to demonstrate this beyond all doubt.

Nor was that the whole story. The Soviet Union had not offered to shield Cuba for purely altruistic reasons. It demanded payment for services, and was in a good position to lay down the terms. Fidel knew precisely what these were—he would have to lie low for a long time to come, and he would have to shelve many of his dearest plans at home and abroad. Was there no alternative, then? In principle at least, there was: the Cuban leader could have followed the Chinese in denouncing the "social imperialism" of the U.S.S.R. His voice had always evoked some response from the Communist family, now thrown into complete disarray by the Czechoslovak debacle. Thus, had he chosen this moment to expose the pseudorevolutionary myth of Soviet policy, his arguments—which he had built up over the years—would certainly not have fallen on deaf ears. But this world have meant challenging two superpowers at once, two giants who would show no mercy to an extremist Cuba allied to China. For that he lacked the courage, and perhaps even the means.

Nor was it realism alone that dictated his choice. In his heart of hearts, Castro agreed neither with China's cultural revolution nor with Czechoslovakia's new course; in his own way, he was genuinely behind the August invasion. True, he hoped for changes from the Soviet bloc, but not for changes initiated by uncontrolled and spontaneous forces. His greatest fear was that too violent uphcavals might paralyze his allies, and leave Cuba to the mercy of the United States. Moreover, independent action by the rank and file was no part of his political program. His Czechoslovak speech had a ring of sincerity, simply because he was not altogether cynical, was not

merely playing at power politics. In an odd way it may even be said to have been a kind of declaration of faith, and as such merits the careful attention of all those who wish to know how Fidel Castro conceived socialism in 1968, on the eve of the tenth anniversary of the Cuban Revolution.

### *A new honeymoon*

Sudden political changes invariably pose serious problems, even in socialist countries whose masters do not take too much notice of public opinion. They throw the leadership—not to mention the ordinary Party members—into utter confusion; experience has shown that every psychological crisis in the ranks of the socialist elite has unavoidable repercussions on society as a whole. After hearing Fidel's speech of August 23, 1968, few people familiar with Cuba's political atmosphere could have believed that he would go beyond certain limits in his reconciliation with the U.S.S.R. His return to the orthodox fold seemed even more improbable as his anti-revisionist fervor had waxed stronger during the long years of the "cold polemic"—the debate on Soviet-American coexistence. Every visitor to the island remembers the passion with which Fidel's closest colleagues vituperated against "those pseudorevolutionaries" responsible for so many setbacks the world revolutionary movement had suffered. To them, Fidel's support for the invasion of Czechoslovakia was a shock, tempered only by the fact that their leader had also repeated his attack on the "mistaken views of some European socialist countries."<sup>12</sup> And so while the Czechoslovak drama struck Cubans a painful blow, many came to see it as the consequence of terrible revisionist errors. A vast propaganda campaign was launched in the island to explain that, far from having surrendered unconditionally, Fidel had taken "very grave risks"—these were his own words—in telling the Soviet Union, at this grave hour in their history, "a few basic truths I have been keeping to myself."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup>. In his speech of August 23, Fidel stressed the fact that he was criticizing the mistaken views of "certain European socialist countries, and not of all of them." He was careful not to be more specific.

<sup>13</sup>. "In town and country, on big estates and small hamlets, in the offices of the Committee for the Defense of the Revolution, the people gathered to study Fidel's speech on the events in Czechoslovakia, and to proclaim their Communist ideals more loudly than ever." Caption on a facsimile of Fidel's speech, covered with signatures by members of an enthusiastic audience, in *Granma*, French weekly summary, September 8, 1968.

The Russians, for their part, adopted a guarded attitude; they put out no flags when Fidel endorsed their military intervention in Czechoslovakia. His speech was not even given a brief mention in *Pravda*, which in general opened its columns to any foreign message that could be considered even vaguely favorable to the invasion. From this Kremlinologists concluded that the rift between Cuba and the Soviet Union had grown so wide that the Russians could not possibly consider it closed—even assuming they had wanted to—after a single gesture by Fidel Castro. The experts argued that the "heroic island" had lost the trust and friendship of the Soviet power elite, and that the Brezhnev team would think twice before allowing itself to be drawn into a fresh Cuban entanglement.

Yet less than a year later, Moscow and Havana were off on a new honeymoon. Nor was it merely a marriage between two independent states this time; the island was still resounding with echoes of Fidel's speech when a most surprising *ideological* rapprochement between Castro and the Eastern bloc was under way. And, unfortunately, the "basic truths" Fidel had addressed to the Russians on August 28, 1968, were uttered not so much for the first time as for the last.

From then on, whenever Castro wished to contrast his views of aggressive socialism with those of the "pseudorevolutionaries," he was most careful to specify that what he had in mind was Czechoslovakia,<sup>13</sup> if Prague were the only place where the revolutionary spirit had grown lax under the evil influence of bourgeois economic reforms.<sup>14</sup> As soon as the situation in Czechoslovakia was normalized, Fidel dropped all references to the "erroneous views" of his European allies.

In November 1968, Fidel received a delegation from the East German Communist Party with great ceremony; breaking a rule he had made after 1965 never again to sign a common declar-

14. In his speech of September 28, 1968, Fidel, referring to Havana's young layabouts, said that "these youngsters probably think they are in Prague," thus implying that the Czechoslovak capital was a hotbed of prostitution and immorality. Some contributors to the army journal, *Erde Olivo*, later used this argument against Cuba's nonconformist intellectuals whom they accused of searching for the "dolce vita à la Prague." During this whole period, the Cuban press published a stream of cartoon, direct attacks, and veiled insinuations against Dubcek and his supporters. The palm in this anti-Czechoslovak race must certainly go to the satirical journal *Palante*, which published a cartoon coupling Prague intellectuals with Adolf Hitler and Wall Street bankers. (No. 45, August 29, 1968).

tion with orthodox Communists, he now put his name to a joint communiqué on the "necessity of fighting against all forms of revisionism and opportunism."<sup>15</sup> To Cubans, accustomed to lumping together Russians, East Germans, and the rest as "revisionists," this communiqué must have had a peculiar ring, especially as there was no official explanation of the reasons that had persuaded Fidel to scrap his old interpretations of revisionism and opportunism, in favor of the Russian one. But all that was only a beginning.

On January 2, 1969, before an immense crowd, Fidel drew up his balance sheet of ten years of revolution. He spoke of past achievements and present difficulties, of the great efforts that were still called for, and of the prospects for the future. Everyone present was certain that he was about to render the customary homage to the foremost organizer of a socialist economy in Cuba and to the great champion of Latin American revolution, Ernesto Che Guevara. Yet that day Fidel made no mention of either his former minister of industry, or of the Latin American *guerrilleros*. Instead, he ended his oration by expressing deep gratitude to the socialist camp and particularly to the Soviet Union for their aid and great show of solidarity. And he concealed his obvious embarrassment behind such phrases as: "In all fairness we must recognize that Soviet aid has been crucial for our country," or "Honesty compels us to say that Soviet aid has been crucial during these decisive years."<sup>16</sup>

15. The East German delegation was led by Paul Werner, a member of the Politbüro and Secretariat of his Party. Werner signed the communiqué on November 21, 1968 (see *Granma*, Spanish weekly summary, December 1, 1968), after touring Havana Province in Fidel's company (see illustrated report, *Bohemia*, November 22, 1968). In this connection, it is interesting to note that, of all countries in the Soviet bloc, East Germany is the one that has most resolutely applied those "economic bourgeois reforms" which according to Fidel were at the root of all Czechoslovakia's ills. It is also a well-known fact that the opportunism of the leaders of the German Democratic Republic is equalled only by their Prusso-Stalinist arrogance. Incidentally, Ernesto Che Guevara, addressing a meeting at the Ministry of Industry on July 14, 1962, accused the East Germans of supplying Cuba with *porquerías* (garbage) instead of the promised factories. It was, in fact, this discovery which first made him wonder about the quality of deliveries from the Soviet bloc.

16. See Fidel Castro's speech on the Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution, *Granma*, French weekly summary, January 5, 1969.

17. See *Granma*, French weekly summary, August 3, 1969.

18. See *Granma*, French weekly summary, June 15, 1969.

Even these stylish qualifications would eventually disappear from his speeches. Thus, in July 1969, when a Soviet naval squadron dropped anchor off Havana for the first time since the Revolution, Fidel surrounded by an entire galaxy of leaders (including Blas Roca, suddenly brought back from oblivion), boarded the cruiser Grozny and went into raptures about the superior naval skills and unequalled revolutionary qualities of the Red sailors.<sup>17</sup> Soon afterward, the Cuban press as a whole praised the internationalism of the Soviet sailors, all of whom made a personal contribution to the ten-million-ton *zaifra* by cutting sugar cane for half a day. The great prose devoted to this *hermoso gesto de solidaridad internacionalista* was singularly reminiscent of the writings in *Hoy* during the first Cuban-Russian honeymoon in 1961.

In other respects, too, the Cubans went out of their way to please their new allies. One month earlier, in June 1969, Fidel had revoked one of the rare collective decisions by the Central Committee (adopted during that very session of January 1968 which had voted to hand Russia's friend Escalante over to the courts); namely, that the Communist Party of Cuba would not participate in the world conference of Communist parties convened by the Soviet Union. In accordance with his new line, he sent Carlos Rafael Rodriguez to Moscow, ostensibly as an observer; Rodriguez delivered an important speech with this sonorous ending: "We declare from this tribune that in any decisive confrontation, whether it be an act by the Soviet Union to avert threats of dislocation or provocation to the socialist system, or an act of aggression by anyone against the Soviet people, Cuba will stand unflinchingly by the U.S.S.R."<sup>18</sup>

This oath of loyalty had the widest political and ideological implications; it went much further than a mere declaration of friendship with the U.S.S.R. The Chinese, as well as the Vietnamese, the Koreans, and other non-aligned parties had refused to attend this conference, precisely because its main object, as everyone knew, was to enlist support for a political—and perhaps even a military—crusade against Peking.<sup>19</sup> By sending

19. Neither the "Chinese question" nor Czechoslovakia were on the official agenda of that conference of Communist parties, several of which had made it a condition of their attendance that no internecine disputes would be aired. But from the second day of the conference, their wishes were completely ignored, and the Secretary of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., Leonid Brezhnev, saw fit to deliver a scathing diatribe against China. The Russians also did a great deal of lobbying and, in particular, tried to sound out the delegates' reactions to a possible pre-emptive strike against China's nuclear installations in Sinkiang. Anti-Chinese parties had reached such heights in Moscow that many Communist parties much closer to the U.S.S.R. than the Cuban had carefully avoided declaring their "unflinching" solidarity with the Soviet Union. No wonder, therefore, that the world press treated the presence and declaration of Carlo Rafael Rodriguez as Russia's chief political success during this conference.

Carlos Rafael Rodriguez and by having him proclaim his unflinching solidarity with the Soviet Union, Fidel had thus made a farcaching political choice: unlike the Vietnamese and the Koreans he had decided not to sit on the fence between Moscow and Peking, but to side quite openly with the former. Not surprisingly, therefore, on October 1, 1969, during the twentieth anniversary of the Chinese revolution, no Cuban leader was found on the tribune in Tien An Men Square, while the North Korean president, Choi Yong-kun, the North Vietnamese premier, Pham Van Dong, and the president of the N.L.F., Huu Tho, stood right beside Mao Tse-tung.

The Soviet Union and its allies did not remain insensible to the latest Cuban gesture. They began once again to speak of the heroic island in flattering terms, and seemed only too happy to forget all about the heresies and the lack of discipline of the preceding years. *Pravda*, *Trybuna Ludu*, *Neues Deutschland*, once more resounded with glowing reports about the enthusiasm of the Cubans, their great achievements, and the radiant future that lay in store for them.<sup>20</sup> Out of delicacy, no East European envoy made reference to the lapses of the past, or to Castro's mistaken predilection for moral incentives (which he had never renounced). Cuba was praised as a good people's democracy, whose main purpose at the moment was to beat the sugar production records. On the occasion of July 26th celebrations in 1969, the leaders of the Warsaw Pact countries sent their good wishes to Fidel in terms they reserved for the best-loved members of the family. Even the strongly anti-Guevarist and anti-Leftist French Communist Party, anxious not to be left out of this joyful reunion, sent the warmest greetings to the comrades in Havana.

Cultural and political exchanges between the Soviet Union and Cuba continued to grow, and other members of the bloc followed suit by sending delegations and experts to the island. Yet none of them seemed anxious to make Cuba any economic presents or to help it alleviate the cruel shortage of consumer goods that kept growing worse throughout 1969; like the first great love affair of 1961-62, the new honeymoon coincided painlessly with a marked drop in supplies on the island.<sup>21</sup> There

20. East European press reports on Cuba invariably involved a number of falsifications. Thus *Trybuna Ludu* (December 23, 1969) ingeniously turned René Dumont's article in *Le Monde* (December 9, 1969) entitled "Cubans First Time Hanging on Their Hands," into a paean of praise to the policies of Fidel Castro.

21. In 1969 bread rationing was introduced (50g per person per day), and several other rations were cut. To make things worse, the authorities had decided to hasten Fidel's plans for *El Cordon de la Habana* by forcing all peasants in the suburbs, and even people with kitchen gardens, to plant coffee, with the result that the stock of staple foods in the capital dropped to almost catastrophic proportions. René Dumont mentions this in his article, referred to above.

was no direct relation between the number of pro-Soviet speeches in Cuba and the cost in the rations, but for many Cubans who had not forgotten their leaders' complaints about the quality of "revisionist" merchandise, the concomitance of friendship with the U.S.S.R. and restrictions at home did not seem fortuitous.

But this time, unlike 1961-62, the Castroist leaders did not promise miracles as a result of the new friendship. Leaving little room for illusion, they mobilized the Cubans for the battle when themselves would have to wage against underdevelopment and poverty. And because this battle was intensified during 1969-70, on the approach of the ten-million-ton *zafrera*, it seemed only natural that Fidel and his men should have spoken more and more about production and less and less about the simultaneous construction of socialism and Communism. All the traditional holidays (including even Christmas and New Year) were canceled, in an effort to help the workers to keep "their" promise to reach the great sugar target. *Granma* was now full of technical talk about production techniques and allied topics, repeating that Fidel was particularly concerned about reliability, discipline, and clockwork organization at work, and that he expected everyone to pain in the pitiless struggle against sabotage, unpunctuality, and absenteeism.<sup>22</sup> In the immediate present, good *macheteros* were obviously more useful than *hombres nucos*.

Indeed, the old "heretical" ideas were not merely put on ice; they were discreetly, but systematically, replaced by quite a different doctrine, namely that the building of socialism calls for a high investment rate coupled to low consumption, and for maximum technical and scientific knowledge; in short for economic growth in the quickest possible time. This line bore a suspicious resemblance to the doctrine of the Soviet Union at the time of forced industrialization and collectivization, and less and less to that which Che, followed by Fidel and Dorticos, had held up as the only way to spare Cuba the distortions to which a "certain type of socialism" was prone. Barely perceptible at first, the new doctrine became more and more obvious until, at

the end of 1969, it culminated in the official declaration that the Soviet model of the '30s was perfect for Cuba and that it was being applied at full speed.

Thus, addressing the graduation class of the school of political science and the faculty of sociology at the University of Havana on September 24, 1969, Armando Hart said: "We think that a serious study of the experience of the first proletarian state in history, the Soviet Union, is quite indispensable. We go even further than that, and assert that this experience is a decisive element in teaching us what we ourselves have to do. . . . The U.S.S.R. will show us which are the cultural, technical, and organizational factors that have enabled the U.S.S.R. to make so prodigious a leap in production. . . . The Soviet success is explained first and foremost by the extraordinary conditions resulting from the socialization of the means of production, and especially from their collectivization in the late '20s and the early '30s. . . . The fact that a major proportion of the country's resources was invested in industry, and that the basic sources of the nation were used for socialist development and investment rather than for home consumption has been another, equally decisive, factor in the forward leap of Soviet production, so that if we study the Soviet path with a view to the better planning of our own, we are bound to conclude that the factors which presided over the unprecedented rise in production in the U.S.S.R. are the very same factors which our revolution stresses today."

"The raising of our cultural and technological level," Hart continued, "is an essential aspect of improved production and of a more efficient economy, and hence is one of our most important tasks. . . . Bourgeois propaganda is full of dogmatic, simplistic, and certainly false claims about cultural development in the Soviet Union. . . . Apart from specific errors that might have been committed—and what revolutionary process is totally exempt from these?—there is no doubt that in a mere fifty years the U.S.S.R. has passed on from underdevelopment and backwardness to the peaks of science and technology, so that she has become the undisputed technical and scientific leader of the world."<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The struggle against absenteeism proved especially arduous in Cuba, where food was scarcer than money, so that the traditional stick no longer worked. The minister of labor, Jorge Risquet, cited this fact (see *Granma* French weekly summary, August 17, 1969), as a justification for introducing "labor cards" (as from September 1969) on which all breaches of discipline would be noted with a view to possible prosecution.

<sup>23</sup> See *Granma*, French weekly summary, October 5, 1969. Armando Hart's speech has also been published in pamphlet form by Ediciones Cor., Havana, 1969.

This frank statement—and the Cuban leaders were nothing if not frank—would have gravely upset Moscow and its allies only a few years earlier. For though the Russians themselves kept stressing that they had become "the undisputed technical and scientific leaders of the world" and even promised miraculous advances in the future, they also wished to play down that whole troubled period of the '30s which had helped them to reach their high level of production and culture. Khrushchev's revelations, or rather semi-revelations, on that subject had left no one in doubt as to the price the U.S.S.R. had been forced to pay for these advances. The '30s in Russia—the Stalinist phase—were not only marked by a rise in industrial production (and by a grave recession in agricultural production), but also by coercion, terror, and massive deportations, all of which have left deep scars on the minds of Soviet man. Stalin's successors had no desire to explain how it was possible for such crimes to be committed in the name of socialism; so, after blaming the worst excesses on Stalin's character defects, they invited their compatriots and their comrades abroad to look to the future and to speak as little as possible of the past. Even the few Russians still reluctant to agree to this obliteration of so fundamental a chapter in Soviet history, indeed in the history of world Communism, were unwilling to argue that the Stalinist method of "primitive socialist accumulation" had been a happy one; they contented themselves with claiming that Stalinism had been historically unavoidable, a necessary evil in the dramatic and exceptional circumstances in which the U.S.S.R. found herself at the time.

socialist consciousness of the masses and not—as the Russians advocated—on material incentives? How could there be any real agreement between Havana and Moscow when neither was apparently prepared to make concessions on so fundamental a point? The only possible explanation was that the question of incentives had suddenly lost its former importance, to the extent that, despite continued differences on this point, the Russians and the Cubans suddenly found that they were trying to build the same type of society—marked by the classical Soviet model. What then was the real meaning of Fidel Castro's Czechoslovak speech?

His appeal of August 23, 1968, rested on three pillars: 1) the Communist Party must exercise "the prerogatives of the dictatorship of the proletariat" until socialism and Communism are achieved; 2) the "socialist community" embodies the hopes of all struggling people and of the world revolutionary movement, and must be defended at all costs against external or internal enemies; 3) workers in socialist societies must be willing to make sacrifices to strengthen not only their own countries but also the socialist community at large.

After Armando Hart's speech, the striking similarity between this doctrine and that which held sway in the U.S.S.R. during the '30s became much more obvious than it had been at the time of Fidel's own address on August 23, 1968. When Fidel spoke, no one was prepared to believe that he was in fact pleading for the concentration of power in the hands of a supercentralized and monolithic bureaucracy, in the name of the dictatorship of the proletariat. After all, Fidel's well-known anti-Stalinism was based on familiarity with the most authentic Marxist analysts, Isaac Deutscher among them; it was neither superficial nor accidental. Fidel knew as well as anyone the real nature of the pseudodictatorship of the proletariat, personified by Stalin; he was aware of its failings. Moreover, he had told me several times that the Cuban Revolution was not a proletarian revolution. And yet, a careful perusal of his text proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that he had adopted the Soviet power thesis, although he still explained it so clumsily, mixing up essential notions and losing his way in a terminological maze, that the whole thing looked like a quick improvisation, in a

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The development of Cuban-Soviet relations since the August 23 speech raised many other questions as well. It is a well-known fact that the Soviet Union refuses to recognize all forms of Communism other than its own; that it will not tolerate the least attempt by fraternal countries to give socialism a new face. How, under these conditions, could it possibly become reconciled to Fidel, immediately after he had uttered his great "basic truths," and after his declaration that he was as determined as ever to build a society based on appeals to the

moment of great confusion due to the Czechoslovak crisis.<sup>34</sup> Fidel's second "pillar" was even shakier. For several years he had been denouncing the Soviet policy of compromising with the enemy to the detriment of the world revolutionary movement. Che had expressed Fidel's own views when he showed that Vietnam was alone in its heroic struggle; he had gone to fight in Latin America without ever dreaming of asking the U.S.S.R. or its Warsaw Pact partners if they welcomed "two, three, many Vietnams." Yet less than a year after Che's death, Fidel was claiming that the Soviet Union and her four Warsaw Pact allies formed "a socialist community" embodying the hopes of the struggling masses. Why they and not China which, as Fidel himself had admitted in 1967, was far more revolutionary? Why they and not Cuba, which had simply been presented with the *fait accompli* of the Czechoslovak invasion but had never been consulted about it?

Fidel's use of the term "socialist community" was especially misguided as it led him to conclusions opposed to both the theory and the traditions of the international revolutionary movement. For had there been a true socialist community, it would not have had to impose its views on Czechoslovakia by force. By its very nature socialism is not for export, and certainly not for export under the rule of the bayonet. Real socialism can only be built by workers who have thrown off their shackles and are conscious of their collective purpose. There is no such thing as "a higher Communist right" to ignore this essential principle.<sup>35</sup> By sending its tanks into Prague, the

"socialist community" merely demonstrated—if there was still any need—that it was no community at all, and that it held the traditional ideals of the labor movement in contempt.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, even taking the most cynical geopolitical view, one could help concluding that, far from strengthening its position, the occupation of Czechoslovakia has weakened the Soviet Union militarily—no less than politically and morally.<sup>37</sup>

Finally, in the third part of his plea, Fidel implied that if the revolutionary spirit has grown lax in Eastern Europe since the end of the Cold War, it is because the leadership has paid more attention to peace campaigns and material prosperity than to the fight against imperialism. He accordingly advised them, in their own interests and for the common good, to return to the old policy. He declared that "the masses will work much more enthusiastically and offer much greater sacrifices once they appreciate that the hard realities are such that only by giving priority to capital investments can the socialist community hope to defend its achievements." Moreover, it is only by working for the country's good that they can apparently acquire the political consciousness needed to realize their Communist ideals.

But here, too, the historical experience of the Soviet Union disproves Fidel's claims. The '30s and the Cold War, rather than boosting the world revolutionary movement, have turned it into a pawn in the hands of the Soviet leaders. Russia and the anti-imperialist movement suffered much more from this policy

<sup>34</sup> The Soviet leaders, though unconcerned about a socialist consensus, were nevertheless far too intelligent to think they could find a theoretical justification for their act of aggression. They realized that only the Czechoslovak Communist Party could vindicate them by declaring after the event that it had asked for fraternal aid from the Warsaw Pact countries...  
<sup>35</sup> ...and thanks also to the continued presence of their tanks—the Russians stand up to serious examination, simply because the strength of any country, and quite especially of a country that calls itself socialist, is measured by the determination of its inhabitants to defend it themselves and to work for its future. Now the invasion of Czechoslovakia has not only killed that determination inside Czechoslovakia but has completely demoralized the masses in the other socialist countries; they have come to realize that Russia will not tolerate the slightest move toward democratization, and that their future is bleak indeed.

<sup>36</sup> Thus Fidel Castro declared that the dictatorship of the proletariat was an essential function of the Communist Party. Now he must have known from his Marxist readings at the University of Havana that the dictatorship of the proletariat, as its name indicates, is a function of the proletariat and not vice versa. In principle, the dictatorship of the proletariat has in the Soviets, i.e., in the entire working class. Though this principle has hardly been respected in practice, the U.S.S.R. has always preserved a formal distinction between the Soviets and the Communist Party. Moreover, even Stalinist rhetoric was invariably full of the leading role of the working class.  
<sup>37</sup> Thus when Stalin exported his type of revolution to Eastern Europe on the pretext of helping his struggling comrades, even he took good care to dress the People's Democracies up as genuine revolutionary states. However, the present situation in these countries demonstrates that exported socialism is not authentic, since twenty years after the birth of the Czechoslovak revolution it apparently has to be kept alive with tanks.

than their capitalist class enemy. Moreover in the U.S.S.R itself, the external danger did nothing to stimulate the enthusiasm and class consciousness of the masses; why else was that period marked by a policy of conscription and deliberate terror? Even the socialist consciousness of the Party vanguard turned out to be a somewhat tenuous affair. We must judge the tree by its fruits: if heroic work did indeed produce true Communists, the Soviet Union, having lived for decades under a regime befitting a "besieged fortress," would have been full of incorruptible *hombres nuevos*, instead of teeming with the "soft pseudorevolutionaries" of whom Fidel had complained not so long before.

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Thus, by trial and error, the Cubans and Russians discovered in 1968 that they were defending one and the same political system, albeit in different parts of the world and under quite different conditions. As a result they drew close both ideologically and politically, and were able to chant with one voice the slogans from the past. In other respects, their second honeymoon in no way resembled the first. In 1961, they had come together somewhat by chance, in an atmosphere of great optimism, the Castroists believing that they had not only found a powerful ally, but also the socialist idea that ally was thought to embody. Cubans were ignorant of most of the theoretical foundations of socialism, of the way in which it had been misappplied by their new friends, and of the resulting crises. Later, when experience opened their eyes, they made great efforts to emerge from the ideological and practical snare of Soviet "socialism," while maintaining what had by then become indispensable economic relations with the U.S.S.R. In other words, their return to the road in 1968-69 was not based on the same old naive illusions but was the unavoidable consequence of their failure—perhaps even voluntary—to build a Cuban road to socialism. It was also a sad event, for Cubans had by then come to appreciate that their powerful European allies would do little to lighten their burden,

and less for the Latin American *guerrilleros*. Russia in the '30s may not have been more revolutionary, but at least Stalin's professions of faith had still sounded credible enough to inspire a vast international following. In 1968, no one, not even Fidel's enemies, could seriously believe in the revolutionary intentions of Brezhnev's "socialist community"; and those who pretended to do so, like Fidel Castro, could only have been paying lip service under duress, and were certainly not taken in by their own rhetoric.

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Thus the gap between the Castroist program and post-revolutionary reality has given rise to a whole chain of dis-appointments which in turn have caused more resentment, forcing Fidel to use even more authoritarian methods. In all fairness, however, we must not view these developments in isolation. We must remember that during the same period most underdeveloped countries, though massively aided by the United States and its capitalist allies, nevertheless regressed economically, suffering famines and poverty on a scale that has become quite unthinkable in postrevolutionary Cuba. If this retrospective survey of the Castroist past shows anything at all, it merely demonstrates that the Soviet bloc is no more capable of solving the problems of underdevelopment than are its imperialist rivals. It should also not be forgotten that a country as small and as vulnerable as Cuba had little chance of standing up to its powerful protectors and rejecting their economic recipes and "socialist" dogmas. It was inevitable that Cuba should have repeated many of the "classic" errors of the Soviet Union.

All the same, the repetition of this drama on the Cuban stage is a most astonishing and saddening spectacle, especially because the Cuban Revolution has been so unlike the rest. It was not born of a cruel civil war as Russia's was during the twenties; it was not imported from outside as "socialism" was in the European Peoples' Democracies following the Second World War. Its leaders were not scarred by Stalinist dogmas or mistaken

ideas of discipline. They were shining examples of originality, and so popular that all other "socialist" regimes turned green with envy. How then did it happen that a movement so close to the pulse of the masses, so open-minded and disinterested, lost touch with reality on the morrow of its victory over the old order? Why did Castro adopt economic plans that had to be quickly abandoned again or that could only be implemented by methods quite ~~out~~ of keeping with the historical promises of the Revolution?

The Cuban experience demonstrates that the choice of ultra-ambitious economic objectives is not just a relic from the Stalinist past. All revolutionary leaders in underdeveloped countries have a tendency to rush off in pursuit of economic pipedreams because they can think of no better way to solve the vast problems of their heterogeneous society. They lack the material resources to immediately rectify all the injustices accumulated under earlier regimes, and they are almost fatalistically led to believe that accelerated economic expansion is the most revolutionary, the most leftist of all possible policies, the only one capable of liquidating the miserable heritage of the past in record time. It should be remembered that, in 1927, when Stalin first drove his country into forced industrialization and collectivization, people believed that he had come around to the views of the Trotskyist opposition, to the extent that such leading leftist critics as Eugen Preobrazhensky became converts to Stalin's cause. But though this policy can be justified on social as well as doctrinal grounds, it is nevertheless completely mistaken; its results have been far more devastating than anyone would have thought possible at the time.

The reader may remember the strange question President Martínez asked me one day in Havana: "What is the aim of the Revolution?" The answer is quite simple and, shorn of theoretical embellishment, goes something like this: "The aim of the Revolution is to hand over to the workers in town and country, that is, to the immense majority of the people, effective control of all social institutions, so that they can freely organize their working life and decide on the collective distribution of its fruits." This program is admittedly simple in the extreme but, as Bertolt Brecht has put it, it is also one of the most difficult to achieve. There can be no doubt about that. But it is none the less true that this program cannot be circumvented or postponed *sine die*. No revolution has culminated in socialism

which has been content to rely exclusively on the promotion of quick economic growth. On the contrary, those countries which have tried to force the economy by authoritarian methods have had to admit defeat in the long run. Nor can the rewards of such a policy be considered fair recompense for the hardships of military conscription. The logic of "primitive socialist accumulation" is such, moreover, that it has to lean heavily on capitalistic methods (hierarchical organization of production, arbitrary decisions as to the utilization of the social product, etc.). Prolonged recourse to such methods is bound to introduce tremendous social and political dislocations which are not offset by the attempts of all revolutionary regimes to uplift the underprivileged of yesterday.

Though it may appear to be "leftist," any coercive attempt to create the "material foundations of socialism" does not solve any real problems of postrevolutionary society, and, ultimately, it is bound to pervert socialist values and to lead to new social crystallizations and to new types of oppression. But there is little need to make this point to the Cuban leaders; in earlier chapters we saw how critical they themselves were, during their "heretical" period, of this emphasis on the construction of the material bases. The fact that Cuba has fallen into the same trap in no way proves that these criticisms have lost their force. On the contrary, recent Cuban developments have shown that if the economic battle is waged in the Soviet manner, the workers, having forfeited all rights, also lose their political initiative. As a result, they become incapable of developing a socialist consciousness or of working for the fundamental objectives of the revolution. True, the very fact that Cuban leaders, though fully aware of all these evils, have nevertheless seen fit to embark on a policy of militarization and conscription seems to prove that good will is not enough, and that, under certain circumstances, coercion becomes unavoidable. Fidel Castro himself confessed to me, in sorrow, that he saw no chance of granting the workers the right to self-determination in the near future, let alone of introducing a truly socialist mode of production.

~~FOR BACKGROUND USE ONLY~~

April 1971

SHORT SUBJECTS

ASWAN ON THE NILE. In January Soviet President Nikolai Podgorny joined Egyptian President Anwar Sadat at Aswan on the Nile River and formally inaugurated the Soviet built Aswan Dam. The Soviets have been involved with this dam ever since the United States withdrew from the project in 1956. For the past 11 years the Soviets have maintained a 3,000-man corps of advisors and engineers at the scene. With construction complete, and the dam finally operating, one would think the Soviets could now sit back and contemplate their success.

But almost as soon as Podgorny returned to Moscow the Soviet Ministry of Power Generation and Electrification was called upon to defend the Soviet-build dam against charges that it was hurting the UAR's economy. The former chief construction expert at Aswan, Mr. Alexander Alexandrov, studied the matter for a month and then complained in an Izvestia interview that "bourgeois scribblers are trying their best to belittle the importance of Aswan." Mr. Alexandrov is now Deputy Minister for Power Generation and Electrification in the Soviet Union and it isn't surprising his defense of the Aswan Dam would impugn the motives of those who made the charges. But to prove his case Alexandrov should have answered the criticism with facts rather than rhetoric. Unfortunately, for the Egyptians, Mr. Alexandrov's past experience in dam and power construction had been in Siberia where most of the land is uninhabited and the ecological changes have had little effect on the economy. Certainly the Nile Valley is not Siberia but apparently to the Soviets a dam on the Nile River is no different from one in Siberia.

The Soviets now realize their errors in the building of the dam. In their efforts to defend the dam they admit to certain problems; for example, Lake Nasser behind the dam will gradually fill with silt, the same silt which formerly fertilized the lower Nile Valley. But the issue here is not the point-by-point analysis of charges against the Soviet-built dam but the fact that the Soviets are so sensitive to criticism of the dam. Soviet reaction is such that it seems incredulous that they were not aware that the dam would create problems in the eastern Mediterranean; that it would encourage the spread of bilharzia, a debilitating intestinal disease; and that only two of the 12 turbines would be used. The plain fact is that Soviet quick denials and their use of all the propaganda organs like TASS,

Izvestia and Novosti to publize their denials is in itself an admission of guilt.

GARAUDY ON THE 24TH CPSU CONGRESS. Roger Garaudy, former Politburo member of the French Communist Party expelled from the Party about a year ago for his persistent criticism of the Soviet Union, is always eloquent when he attacks the Soviet system of "socialsim" and Soviet efforts to dictate to the world's Communist parties. An unusually pungent Garaudy article appeared in the large French independent daily, France Soir, on 25 January this year, pegged to the 24th CPSU Congress. Entitled, "A Question of Life or Death for Communist Parties," Garaudy calls for a revolution in Communist thinking. Following a massive compilation of the "errors" of the Soviet Union in its recent history, he asks Communists to consider whether the Soviet failures are a result of "errors" or of the system itself. In the process, he points to the basic failures within the Soviet Union: lack of economic progress, lack of democracy, lack of socialism. He urges Communists to cease apologizing for Soviet errors and to expose the wrongness of the system itself.

We have attached the original article with the translation, and suggest that it be given maximum play in connection with the 24th CPSU Congress.

FAILURE OF SOVIET OIL TECHNOLOGY IN INDIA. The December 1970 issue of the British publication Oil and Gas International reported that the Indian Government was about to turn to private enterprise in its efforts to extract oil from the offshore areas near Bombay. Soviet aid had proved inadequate; the technical assistance provided by the Soviets was primitive and was limited only to shallow water drilling.

This news was confirmed when the Indian Government abandoned the Aliabet Island offshore drilling project early in February. Unsuitable Soviet equipment was given as the reason. The Soviet drills were finally stopped at 4900 feet. Indian geologists claim oil probably exists at the 15,000 feet level but Soviet drills supplied to India are incapable of reaching this depth.

The Indians badly need crude oil, but their reliance for the past 15 years on Soviet promises and equipment has slowed exploration. Soviet exploration techniques are at least ten years behind the West; Soviet drills are not suitable for Indian geological conditions and Soviet equipment cannot operate in deep offshore waters where the most promising oil reserves appear to be located.

It should be noted that in their own oil industry the Soviets have never had to drill deeply for oil; the oil reserves in the

Caucasus are at an average depth of 1600 meters and Soviet drills are designed for use only at these modest depths. The Indians have at last realized that the Soviets cannot make good on their promises, and New Delhi has arranged with a Japanese firm to provide technical assistance for deep water drilling.

SOVIETS WARN WOULD-BE HIJACKERS. The Uzbek newspaper, Pravda Vostoka, on 25 February carried a curiously worded article entitled "Criminal Seized," which seemed to describe a hijacking attempt nipped in the bud. The piece left a good deal unsaid. The "criminal" was not specifically accused of planning to hijack the plane; he was merely arrested on board an aircraft with a revolver and a lot of money in his pocket. No date was given for the incident and the only indication of location was the address given for the article's author -- the Turkestan Military District. Yet, the article seemed to be an obscure warning to would-be hijackers that they will not escape the vigilance of the authorities' eyes, especially along the Central Asian border areas. On the same date Pravda in Moscow menacingly pointed out that the Iranian Government had all but completed enactment of a law stipulating the death penalty for airplane hijacking.

MEXICO PINPOINTS SOVIET AID TO GUERRILLAS. The expulsion last month by Mexico of five ranking Soviet diplomats was a stern warning of the Mexican Government's determination to put an end to Soviet meddling in its internal affairs and, in particular, to Soviet encouragement of radical elements among the nation's students and leftists. Three days before the PNG action was announced, the Mexican police moved against the radical "Revolutionary Action Movement" (MAR) to arrest 19 of its members. MAR, a group dedicated to the violent overthrow of the Mexican Government, was founded at Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow by a nucleus of Mexican students who were attending the university under scholarships granted by the Russian-Mexican Cultural Institute. Background on this case, detailing how the group was in contact with the North Korean embassy in Moscow, got financial aid from the North Koreans, and then went to a military base in North Korea for training in sabotage and terrorism is given in the attached newspaper articles.

This case is but another in the annals of Soviet diplomatic history illustrating the duplicity of that country's diplomacy as one hand is outstretched in pursuit of friendly economic and cultural links throughout the Western Hemisphere while the other hand nurtures indigenous subversion. Although the young revolutionaries had received their training in North Korea, Mexico was not deluded about who had masterminded the entire effort and the government's action taken against the Soviet diplomats was

meant to serve warning that Mexico will not tolerate interference either through the Soviet embassy or the embassies of Poland, Czechoslovakia, or Cuba.

THE WASHINGTON POST  
27 February 1971

CPYRGHT

## Soviets Defend Aswan Against Press Critics

By Anthony Astrachan  
Washington Post Foreign Service

MOSCOW, Feb. 24—"Bourgeois scribblers are trying to pretend they do not see what the Aswan Dam has given the people of the United Arab Republic," a Soviet official complained last weekend.

Aleksandr Aleksandrov was replying to Western criticism of the negative economic and ecological consequences of the dam, the world showpiece of Soviet foreign aid and the keystone of the Soviet position in Egypt. Izvestia printed an interview with him and Tass distributed it to the world press a significant example of Soviet sensitivity to criticism from abroad, and especially from the West.

It was also an example of Soviet insensitivity to ecological problems when political or economic considerations outweigh the environmental. Scientists here are eager to control pollution—less serious than in the West or Japan, but worsening—but the continuing emphasis on gross production enables the economy as a whole to ignore demands for controls that might reduce the gross.

The demands are hardly felt since public opinion does not organize itself here without a command from above, and frequent newspaper attacks on pollution have yet to change the basic situation. The pattern applies to gross political gain as well as gross industrial production.

Besides, the Soviets are the world's champion builders of large dams, and Aleksandrov is deputy minister of power generation and electrification of the Soviet Union. He rose to the job from the position of chief Soviet expert at the con-

struction of Aswan. It is not surprising that his interview ignored the dam's ecological side-effects and impugned the motives of those who brought them to world attention.

Aleksandrov acknowledged Western reports that the dam traps the Nile silt that once fertilized the Nile delta and may some day fill Lake Nasser, now forming behind the dam. He did not mention reports that the newly silt-free river flows strongly enough to undermine downstream banks and bridges and allows sea-changes that have decimated marine life in the eastern Mediterranean.

The deputy minister asserted that the silt will not fill Lake Nasser for 500 years, and that silt "stored" on the lake bottom will be brought to the banks by "hydromechanization" to help reclaim desert land. He did not mention the cost of silt retrieval.

He said that small particles of silt "sufficient for fertilization" pass down the Nile even now. In the next breath he added that the Egyptian government plans to construct artificial fertilizer factories "to compensate for the partial loss of silt." He did not mention the cost of silt retrieval. — 20 per cent of the Egyptian fellah's average income per acre, or \$100 million a year, according to Claire Sterling's reports in The Washington Post.

Izvestia specified that Aleksandrov was replying to articles in Time and Newsweek on the dam's formal dedication last month by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Soviet head of state Nikolai Podgorny.

CPYRGHT

SOVIET EXPERT REAFFIRMS ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF ASWAN

Moscow TASS International Service in English 1613 GMT 20 Feb 71 L

[Text] Moscow Feb, 20 TASS--Alexander Alexandrov, deputy minister of power generation and electrification of the USSR, has rejected assertions by the Western press, including the American "TIME" and "NEWSWEEK" magazines, that the Aswan Dam allegedly damages the UARs economy.

Alexandrov, the former chief USSR expert at the construction of the Aswan Dam, told an IZVESTIA correspondent: "The Aswan Dam has created the possibility of switching all lands to a correct, regular irrigation and of growing three harvests a year. It also made it possible to reclaim 800,000 hectares of desert land. It will be possible to supply fields with water in any dry year. Already now, according to information by the UAR minister of irrigation Zaki Quinawy, the Aswan Dam has sharply increased harvests of cotton, rice and maize and made it possible to enlarge areas sown to sugar cane. On the whole, agricultural production increased by 50 per cent".

"The danger of devastating floods is ruled out by the Aswan hydro-technical complex. The Aswan hydropower station will generate ten thousand million kilowatt hours of electricity a year, that is three and a half times more than was generated in the UAR before. This creates preconditions for a rapid development of industry, including power-consuming industry, and for the electrification of agriculture. Plans of this are already being drawn up by the UAR Government".

The Soviet expert recalled that a certain part of the Western press began its provocative slander campaign in connection with the construction of the Aswan complex already at the time when the international commission had found the Soviet project of Aswan the best and approved it. This press "wrote that Soviet and Egyptian builders will not manage to dam the Nile in time, but we did this in time. The press contended that we will not conclude the dams construction in time, but we did.

It asserted that Soviet people will not find a common language with the Egyptians and will not be able to work with them, but we not only learned to work together but became very close in the course of the joint fraternal labour that produced the majestic Aswan Dam".

Alexandr Alexandrov told the papers correspondent: "An old oriental wisdom says that the sun cannot be obscured by the palm. The bourgeois journalists who try their best to belittle the importance of Aswan should remember this. As is known, Aswan was described as a great accomplishment and a symbol of inviolable Soviet-Arab friendship in the declaration signed by the President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet Nikolai Podgorny and the UAR President Anwar Sadat on the completion and commissioning of the Aswan hydro-power complex".

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Roger Garaudy

A Question of Life and Death for Communist Parties

When Copernicus, year after year had noticed a certain number of "errors" in the trajectory of the stars as it had been tracked in the Ptolemaic system he wondered if it was really a question of "errors" or rather if the "system" itself was not at fault. And he conceived of another system starting with the hypothesis that the earth turned around the sun and not the inverse.

Communists the world over have an analogous problem: after the excommunication of Yugoslavia in 1948, after the revelation of the crimes of the Stalinist period at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Party, after the revolts by workers of Berlin and Poznan in 1956, after the Hungarian uprising of 1956 by students and workers against the Stalinist model of Rakosi, which gave counterrevolution its best chance; after the economic and technical sanctions against China in 1958 and the campaigns of calumny which lead to a schism in the Communist movement; after the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the crimes of "normalization," after the intellectual inquisition in the Soviet Union from the Sinyavsky trial to the shameful campaign underway today against Solzhenitsyn; after the unleashing of anti-semitism in Poland and then in Leningrad; after the massacre of Polish workers on strike -- I forego saying more -- after all that, it is no longer possible to say as has been said up to now after each catastrophe: some "errors" have been committed. We can no longer evade Copernicus' problem: do not all the things we consider as "errors" stem from the system itself? Not the socialist system, but the Soviet system as it has been conceived from Stalin to Brezhnev? And it is not necessary, like Copernicus, to reflect on the great, necessary inversion: to try to conceive of a socialism which is constructed not "from above," but "from below?"

A clue is already given us by the fact that emerging each time from all these movements, from the Yugoslav to the Hungarian workers, from the Czechs to the Poles, is a magic word, always the same, in various forms: self-management, workers' councils!

That helps us to detect the root of the evil. What Marx analyzed as the mechanism for the development of capitalism -- the absolute priority of the production of machinery in relationship to the production of the means of consumption -- the Soviet leaders have made a rule (and even a dogma) for the development of socialism. They have transformed a description of capitalism into a prescription for socialism.

This "law" has been imposed "from above" without asking if those concerned (workers and peasants) were ready to accept it. Turning their backs on the principle of "direct democracy" by which Marx defined the Paris Commune and Lenin defined the Soviets, the Soviets leaders, from

Stalin to Brezhnev, have returned to a "democracy" in which the base is left only with the option of approving its leaders. Instead of overcoming the limitations of the sham "democracy" characteristic of capitalist countries, they have even suppressed some of the positive achievements of capitalist democracy. Industrialization, realized in this manner, involved 50 years of coercion. It is not industrialization which is in question (it is necessary), but the methods by which it was realized.

If only from point of view of economic efficiency, it was a crime: Soviet agriculture was struck a blow from which it has never recovered: after the forced collectivization and the monstrous expropriations of 1929, production fell so badly that at the time of Stalin's death, even the per capita production level of 1913 had not been reached. Even today it has not passed that level and agriculture remains the nightmare of the regime.

From the industrial point of view, production of consumer goods was so far underestimated (because of the system) and the absence of democracy so total, that labor productivity remained very low. The workers, even though stimulated by productivity bonuses, were so uninterested with economic efforts and policy on which they were never consulted, that, despite the enormous advantages inherent in socializing the means of production, the rate of industrial development of the USSR has again become slower than that of capitalist Japan.

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But the political consequences were the most serious. In capitalist regimes the implacable "law of accumulation," for which Marx evolved mathematical laws, led to a situation where investments and the growth rate were decided without even consulting the workers nor taking into consideration their standard of living. This led, in the period of accumulation in France, to the uprising of the Lyons silk weavers and in England and Germany to a series of workers' revolts. The same causes engendering the same effects, the application of the laws of capitalist industrialization and the sham democracy, to which was added coercion, led in the socialist countries, to which this model was exported, to worker revolt in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland.

We now face the formidable accounting of March: the 24th Congress of the Soviet Party. No one doubts that even if the personal rehabilitation of Stalin is not officially decided on, it will be a Congress of re-Stalinization, accompanied by an ideological justification of the crimes committed in Prague, Warsaw, and Leningrad since the last Congress. It will be a dogmatic reaffirmation of bureaucratic centralism. This "integralism" will be accompanied by an attempt to adapt to modern techniques

of management to redress a badly compromised economic situation. But if Lenin could say: "Socialism is the Soviets plus electric power," Stalinism plus computers is not socialism.

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For all Communist parties this Congress poses a question of life or death; are we to await new crimes in order that we may then deplore and disapprove them? Are we again going to keep silent and justify? To judge by the manner in which the attempt was made, after it was duly deplored, to deny the evidence and to justify the unjustifiable concerning the anti-semitic Leningrad trial, the worst is to be feared.

Facts are facts: it was impossible to condemn to defendants of Leningrad for highjacking a plane, for if there had existed the slightest hint of proof, the international press and the jurists of the whole world would have been called to the tribunal to present irrefutable proof of the "Zionist conspiracy" (as was done, with good reason, in Moscow when the pilot of the United States spy plane, Powers, was tried.) In Leningrad, the hearing was held behind closed doors --- which is proof that this was a matter of a rigged trial. How then could they be sentenced? By virtue of this reasoning:

- The only fact acquired was that the accused had made an official request to go to Israel;
- But, whoever wants to go to Israel is a Zionist and Zionism is a conspiracy;
- Therefore the accused is a traitor.

The trouble with this reasoning is that a Jew who decides to go to Israel is simply a citizen who is employing a right recognized by the International Declaration of Human Rights, for which the Soviet Union voted in the UN. To deny this anti-semitism, as was done in L'Humanite by a director of the international section of the Party, is to try to make us believe that the Eiffel Tower stands on its head. To persevere in these justifications at all costs, on the eve of the 24th Congress, is to follow the road to suicide for the Party; it is a disservice to socialism.

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When socialism is disfigured in the eyes of the people it is no longer an internal matter of such and such a country or of such and such a party. It is a matter of concern to each Communist, to each socialist militant. It is therefore indispensable and urgent, before irreparable action is taken, to exercise, prior to the 24th Congress of

March, maximum pressure, taking an unequivocal stand toward the declarations and acts of the Soviet leaders which show so vividly where their course will lead them. It must be said clearly: we will not keep silent; to the contrary, we will publicly denounce everything which will lead to a re-Stalinization. For that is not socialism.

Similarly, and with the same clarity, it is no longer enough to say: this is not the brand of socialism that we want. It is necessary to define the model of self-management socialism and a radically new concept of the party and democracy (toward direct democracy) which will allow us to prevent such perversions.

Only at this cost will the true image of socialism be preserved and the necessary unity prepared to realize socialism.

# ROGER GARAUDY

## FACE A L'OPINION



# Une question de vie ou de mort pour les partis communistes

**L**ORSQUE Copernic eut, d'année en année, relevé un certain nombre « d'erreurs » dans la trajectoire des étoiles, telle qu'elle était traitée en se fondant sur le système de Ptolémée, il se demanda s'il s'agissait vraiment d' « erreurs », ou bien si le « système » lui-même n'était pas la source de toutes les erreurs. Et il conçut un autre système en partant de l'hypothèse que la Terre tournait autour du Soleil et non l'inverse.

Les communistes du monde entier sont devant un problème analogue : après l'excommunication de la Yougoslavie en 1948, après la révélation des crimes de la période stalinienne au XX<sup>e</sup> Congrès du parti soviétique, après les révoltes des ouvriers de Berlin et de Poznan en 1956, après le soulèvement hongrois de 1956, celui des étudiants et des ouvriers contre le modèle stalinien de Rakosi, qui donna à la contre-révolution ses meilleures chances ; après les sanctions économiques et techniques contre la Chine en 1958 et les campagnes de calomnies qui conduisirent à un schisme dans le mouvement communiste ; après l'invasion de la Tchécoslovaquie et les crimes de la « normalisation » ; après l'inquisition intellectuelle en Union Soviétique, du protocole Shtavski à la déshonorante campagne mo-

nne aujourd'hui contre Solzhenitsyne ; après le déferlement d'antisémitisme en Pologne puis à Leningrad ; après le massacre d'ouvriers polonais en grève — et j'en passe — après tout cela, il n'est plus possible de dire, comme on l'a fait jusqu'ici après chaque catastrophe : des « erreurs » ont été commises. Nous ne pouvons plus éluder le problème de Copernic : est-ce que tout ce que nous considérons comme des « erreurs » n'est pas la conséquence du système lui-même ? Non pas le système socialiste, mais le système soviétique tel qu'il a été conçu de Staline à Brejnev ? Et ne faut-il pas, à la manière de Copernic, réfléchir sur la grande inversion nécessaire, essayer de concevoir un socialisme qui ne se construise pas seulement « par en haut », mais par « en bas » ?

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**U**NE indication nous est déjà donnée par le fait que de tous ces mouvements, des Yougoslaves aux ouvriers hongrois, des Tchèques aux Polonois, un mot d'ordre chaque fois émerge, toujours le même, sous des formes diverses : autogestion, conseils ouvriers !

Cela nous aide à déceler la racine du mal. De ce que Marx avait analysé comme mécanis-

me du développement du capitalisme — la priorité absolue de la production des machines par rapport à la production des moyens de consommation — les dirigeants soviétiques ont fait une règle (et même un dogme) du développement du socialisme. D'une description du capitalisme, ils ont fait une prescription pour le socialisme.

Cette « loi » a été imposée « d'en haut », sans se demander si les intéressés (ouvriers et paysans) étaient prêts à l'accepter. Tournant le dos au principe de la « démocratie directe » par lequel Marx définissait la Commune de Paris et Lénine les Soviets, les dirigeants soviétiques, de Staline à Brejnev, en sont revenus à une « démocratie » où il ne reste à la base qu'à approuver ses dirigeants. Au lieu de rompre les limites de la « démocratie » truquée, caractéristique des pays capitalistes, ils ont même supprimé quelques-unes de ses conquêtes. L'industrialisation, réalisée de cette manière, impliquait cinquante ans de contrainte. Ce n'est pas l'industrialisation qui est en cause (elle était nécessaire), mais les méthodes par lesquelles elle fut réalisée.

Même du seul point de vue de l'efficacité économique, ce fut un crime : l'agriculture soviétique en reçut un coup dont elle ne s'est jamais relevée : après la collectivisation forcée

et les prélevements monstrueux de 1929, la production baissa de telle manière qu'à la mort de Staline le niveau de 1913 par tête d'habitant n'était pas atteint. Aujourd'hui encore il n'est pas dépassé et le problème agricole demeure le cauchemar du régime.

Du point de vue industriel, la sous-estimation (découlant du système) de la production des biens de consommation fut telle, et l'absence de démocratie si totale que la productivité du travail demeura très basse : les ouvriers, même stimulés par quelques primes de rendement, se désintéressèrent de l'effort économique et de la politique, sur laquelle ils n'étaient jamais consultés, si bien que, malgré l'énorme avantage que constituait la socialisation des moyens de production, le rythme de développement industriel de l'U.R.S.S. est redevenu inférieur à celui du Japon capitaliste.

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Mais les conséquences politiques furent les plus graves : en régime capitaliste l'implacable « loi d'accumulation », dont Marx a dégagé les lois mathématiques, conduisit à décider des investissements et des rythmes de croissance sans jamais consulter les travailleurs ni tenir compte de leur niveau de vie. Cela amena, dans la période d'accumulation en France, aux soulèvements des canuts lyonnais, en Angleterre et en Allemagne à une série de révoltes ouvrières. Les mêmes causes engendrant les mêmes effets, l'application des lois de l'industrialisation capitaliste à l'industrialisation socialiste, et le truquage de la démocratie, auquel s'ajoutèrent les contraintes, conduisit dans les pays socialistes, où ce modèle était exporté, aux révoltes ouvrières de Hongrie, de Tchécoslovaquie, de Pologne.

« Nous sommes maintenant devant la redoutable échéance de mars : celle du 24<sup>e</sup> Congrès du parti soviétique. Nul ne peut douter que, même si la réhabilitation personnelle de Staline n'y est pas officiellement décidée, ce sera un Congrès de stalinisation, comportant une justification idéologique des crimes commis à Prague, à Varsovie, à Leningrad, depuis le précédent Congrès, et une réaffirmation dogmatique du centralisme bureaucratique. Cet intégrisme s'accompagnera d'une tentative d'adaptation aux techniques modernes de gestion pour redresser une situation économique fort compromise. Mais si Lénine pouvait

dire : « Le socialisme c'est les Soviets plus l'électricité », le stalinisme plus l'ordinateur ce n'est pas le socialisme.

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Ce Congrès pose, pour tous les partis communistes, une question de vie ou de mort : allons-nous attendre que de nouveaux crimes soient commis pour les déplorer et les dénaturer ? Allons-nous nous taire et justifier ? A en juger par la manière dont on tente, après l'avoir déploré, de nier l'évidence et de justifier l'injustifiable, à propos du procès antisémite de Leningrad, le pire est à craindre.

Les faits sont les faits : il était impossible de condamner les accusés de Leningrad pour détournement d'avion, car s'il avait existé le moindre commencement de preuves l'on aurait convoqué la presse internationale et les juristes du monde entier au tribunal pour faire la preuve irrécusable du « complot sioniste » (comme on l'a fait, avec juste raison, à Moscou, lorsque fut jugé Powers, le pilote d'un avion-espion des Etats-Unis). A Leningrad, ce fut le huis clos, ce qui est la preuve qu'il s'agissait bien d'un procès d'intention. Comment, dès lors, condamner ? En vertu de ce raisonnement :

— Le seul fait acquis c'est que les accusés avaient fait une demande officielle pour partir en Israël ;

— Or, celui qui veut partir en Israël est un sioniste et le sionisme est un complot ;

— Donc le prévenu est un traître.

Le malheur, pour ce raisonnement, c'est qu'un Juif qui décide de partir en Israël est simplement un citoyen qui use d'un droit reconnu par la déclaration internationale des Droits de l'Homme, que l'Union soviétique a voté à l'O.N.U. Nier cet antisémitisme, comme l'a fait, dans l'Humanité, un dirigeant de la section de politique internationale du parti, c'est vouloir nous faire croire que la Tour Eiffel repose sur sa pointe. Persévérez dans ces justifications à tout prix, à la veille du 24<sup>e</sup> Congrès, c'est aller dans la voie du suicide du parti c'est discréditer le socialisme.

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ORSQUE le socialisme est désiguré aux yeux des peuples, ce n'est plus une affaire intérieure de tel pays ou de tel parti. Chaque commu-

niste, chaque militant du socialisme est concerné. Il est donc indispensable et urgent, avant que l'irréparable ne soit commis, avant le 24<sup>e</sup> Congrès de mars, d'exercer la pression maximale en prenant une attitude sans équivoque devant les déclarations et les actes des dirigeants soviétiques qui montrent clairement vers quoi ils s'acheminent. Il faut dire nettement : nous ne nous taillons pas, mais au contraire nous dénoncerons publiquement tout ce qui conduit à une restalinisation. Car, cela, ce n'est pas le socialisme.

Et, parallèlement, avec la même netteté, il ne suffit plus de dire : ce n'est pas ce socialisme-là que nous voulons. Il faut définir le modèle de socialisme d'autogestion et la conception radicalement nouvelle du parti et de la démocratie (tendant vers la démocratie directe) qui permettent de prévenir de telles perversions.

A ce prix seulement sera sauvegardée la véritable image du socialisme et préparée l'unité nécessaire pour la réaliser.

CPYRGHT

JAPAN TIMES  
18 March 1971

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## Mexico Guerrilla Chief Admits to Armed Plot

MEXICO CITY (UPI) — The accused leader of 49 North Korean-trained Mexican guerrillas Tuesday admitted in court his group planned "armed warfare" to overthrow the Government.

Fabricio Gomez Sauza, 38, an unemployed economics professor, and 18 other alleged terrorists ratified prior confessions at a preliminary hearing in a heavily-guarded courtroom in Lecumberri Prison.

The Government Monday night announced arrest of the 19. Another member of the group turned state's evidence and will not be prosecuted. The 29 other members are the object of a nationwide manhunt.

Gomez Sauza said the members of the Revolutionary Action Movement (MAR) were trained by North Korean Labor Party officials at a military base outside Pyongyang.

None of the 18 men and three women showed signs of bruises or beatings from their lengthy police interrogation. They appeared in good spirits and flashed the "V" for victory sign with their fingers for the benefit of photographers.

Judge Eduardo Ferrer MacGregor has 72 hours to decide whether there is sufficient evidence to declare the suspects formal prisoners and hold them for trial.

Lopez Murillo attributed capture of the guerrillas to statements made by Francisco Parades Ruiz, who was arrested after MAR operatives robbed a Mexico City bank.

"He spilled everything," Lopez Murillo said. In exchange for evidence, Lopez Murillo said, "the Government gave him 50,000 pesos (\$4,000) and a trip to Japan with his Japanese-born wife."

The accused guerrillas financed part of their operations by selling weapons to the underworld, Federal District Police Chief Rogelio Flores Curiel said Wednesday.

Flores Curiel said police have arrested three "common criminals, with no apparent political ideology," who purchased an arms cache from MAR for an undisclosed sum.

The arsenal was seized and included six M1 rifles, two sub-machine guns, a machine gun, 12 homemade bombs and 1,129 shells of different caliber, he said.

Flores Curiel said the three suspects used the weapons in 19 robberies of banks, supermarkets, pharmacies and liquor stores in the capital in recent months.

EL UNIVERSAL GRAFICO, Mexico City

19 March 1971

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## Simpatía de Otros Países

Por OSCAR DEL RIVERO

Los embajadores de Colombia y de Honduras, señores doctor César Augusto Pantoja y doctor Hernán López Callejas, expresaron esta mañana que sus respectivos gobiernos aceptan y ven con simpatía la decisión adoptada por el gobierno de México con relación a declarar "non gratos" a cinco diplomáticos soviéticos.

El diplomático colombiano expresó: "Con fraternal simpatía recibimos la decisión del gobierno del Presidente Luis Echeverría, pues consideramos que sus actos, así como los del secretario de Relacio-

respeto entre los pueblos y el velar por la paz y la estabilidad interna de esta gran nación".

Agregó el embajador Augusto Pantoja que "todos los pueblos latinoamericanos nos solidarizamos con México, nuestro hermano mayor, porque conocemos las normas tradicionales de respeto integral que México ha brindado siempre al mundo, particularmente en sus relaciones con los países".

Por su parte el embajador de Honduras, manifestó que "México por tradición histórica ha sido respetuoso de los asuntos internos de los países con los que mantiene relación, y que la "no intervención" ha sido una de las normas fundamentales de la política exterior mexicana".

Indicó que en el caso de los cinco diplomáticos soviéticos que el gobierno mexicano declaró ayer "personas

muy delicadas y que como todo país libre y soberano, la decisión del gobierno mexicano es digna y justa.

Ambos diplomáticos coincidieron en señalar que el gobierno de México tiene el más absoluto derecho de velar por su paz interna y por su estabilidad, y que cualquiera decisión que tome es plenamente soberana.

El gobierno de Colombia, estableció recientemente relaciones diplomáticas con la Unión Soviética, en tanto que Honduras, se ha negado sistemáticamente a establecer contacto con la URSS. En la América Central el único país que tiene relaciones diplomáticas con la URSS es Costa Rica.

DAILY TELEGRAPH, London  
17 March 1971

## POLICE HUNT MEXICAN GUERRILLAS

By Our Correspondent in  
CPYRGHT Mexico City

MEXICAN police were yesterday hunting the remnants of a guerrilla movement whose members were alleged to have planned to plunge the country into disorder and clear the way for a Communist takeover.

Members of the group were said to have been trained in guerrilla tactics in North Korea.

Senor Julio Sanchez Vargas, Prosecutor General, said 19 of the leading members of the movement had been arrested. They admitted that they robbed banks and planned acts of sabotage and terrorism.

### Study in Moscow

Several of the group were former students at the Patrice Lumumba Friendship University, Moscow. The idea for the guerrilla organisation, which they called the Movement of Revolutionary Action, had come to them while studying in the Russian capital.

The Mexicans then approached the North Korean Embassy. Between 1968 and the end of

1969 three groups were sent to a military camp near Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, for training in weapons, use of explosives and urban and rural guerrilla tactics.

The prosecutor said that the Russian authorities had allowed the groups to cross Russian territory with North Korean passports issued by the Pyongyang Embassy in East Berlin.

Mexico, one of the most stable of the Latin American countries, maintains diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The Russians have a huge embassy in Mexico which is widely regarded as one of their main espionage centres in the Central American area.

The prosecutor's statement did not say if an official protest would be made to the Russians. I understand this is likely. Mexico has no relations with North Korea.

### Training schools

Mexican police said they found rifles, pistols, shortwave radio sets and large sums of money when they arrested the guerrillas. The guerrillas had set up training schools in four Mexican cities.

Members of the group confessed that they robbed a bank last December and took £34,000.

The claim that the North Koreans played a role in training the guerrillas did not come as a surprise in diplomatic circles in Mexico. Although Cuba had been a centre for the training of Leftists from Latin American countries for many years, the island has recently been reported cutting back on

this activity under Soviet pressure.

Kim Il Sung, North Korea's leader, is one of the heroes of Leftist youth in Latin America. He led a guerrilla war against the Japanese during the 1939-45 War.

In a bank raid in Mexico City last month, a guard was kicked by the robbers as he lay dying on the floor. Police believe the Revolutionary Action guerrillas, who had also set up an organisation in the countryside, carried out this robbery and others throughout the country in the last few months.

The Japan Times Wednesday, March 17, 1971

CPYRGHT

## Mexico Guerrillas Trained by N. Korea

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The Mexican attorney general's office announced Monday it has broken up a guerrilla movement whose members were trained in North Korea.

Attorney General Julio Sanchez Vargas said at a news conference that the 19 persons arrested were all members of a group that called itself Revolutionary Action Movement (MAR) and its purpose was to create urban guerrilla groups in this capital and other Mexican cities. All those arrested are Mexican.

"They have received military and political training at different times since 1968 in a military base near Pyongyang (N. Korea), sponsored by the Government of that country," Sanchez Vargas stated.

"Their purpose," he went on "was to establish in Mexico a Marxist-Leninist regime. They were trained in the use of all types of weapons, explosives, rural and urban guerrilla tactics and they received political indoctrination."

Three of those arrested were women.

The attorney general's announcement was the first public report of a Marxist group with the avowed purpose of overthrowing the Mexican Government by armed force.

Sanchez Vargas said that the group included electronic experts and youngsters who had studied in the Lumumba University of Moscow under a change program.

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# Mexico Expels 5 Russians

From News Dispatches

MEXICO CITY, March 18

Mexico today ordered the expulsion of five diplomats from the Soviet embassy here, including Charge d'Affaires Dmitri A. Diakonov.

The order was communicated to Diakonov by Mexican Foreign Minister Emilio Rabasa in a short meeting at the ministry. It came two days after Mexico announced the arrest of members of an anti-government guerrilla group who had attended a Soviet university.

Rabasa did not relate the Soviet diplomats' expulsion to the breaking of the guerrilla ring, though sources that Reuter identified as "reliable" said it was. Rabasa declined to answer any questions from newsmen on this point.

The other four diplomats named and ranks were given by news agencies as: Boris Kolomyakov, a first secretary; Boris Voskovoinikov, indicated in different news dispatches as a first and a second secretary; and Alexander Bolshakov, a second secretary.

On Wednesday, Mexico recalled its envoy to Moscow for consultations that were described as "a temporary diplomatic withdrawal." News stories at the time said that the Mexican ambassador to the Soviet Union would remain in Mexico "until further notice."

The Soviet ambassador to Mexico, Igor K. Kolosovsky, has been in the Soviet Union for more than two weeks, recuperating from an illness, according to news reports.

According to Mexican government officials, the members of the guerrilla group had been trained at a military base near Pyongyang, North Korea.

Mexican President Luis Echevarria — without referring to the Soviet Union — told a meeting of senators that Mexico was "being attacked now when it has stated that it wants a respectful and peaceful reciprocal coexist-

ence . . ."

A government official said that it was assumed that the Soviet Union knew of the Mexicans' trip to Pyongyang from Moscow because the Mexicans used North Korean passports.

The guerrillas — one source said there were 20 rather than 19 — were charged with murder, conspiracy, incitement to rebellion, theft, illegal use of weapons and forgery.

The arrested guerrillas said Tuesday, at a news conference, that they were members of the Revolutionary Action Movement. Other members of the group said that guerrillas active in western Mexico had planned to kidnap a diplomat or government official to gain the release of their arrested fellow members.

The Soviet embassy has a total of 25 diplomats listed as members of its staff. The Mexican embassy in Moscow is much smaller — three or four members, according to reports.

WASHINGTON POST

24 March 1971

*Rowland Evans and Robert Novak*

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## Soviet Backfire in Mexico

QUITE APART from the vast effrontery of the Soviet Union's aborted attempt to plant highly trained Mexican agents and provocateurs inside Mexico, the sudden exposure of the eight-year-old plot may have a profound anti-Soviet reaction throughout Latin America.

Moscow's diplomatic probing with traditionally anti-Communist governments in the hemisphere, just on the verge of success, is now endangered by the Soviet cloak-and-dagger maneuver. The facts of that maneuver, breathtaking in its audacity, are just now coming into focus.

In 1963, under auspices of the Mexican-Soviet cultural exchange agreement, the Soviet-Mexican Cultural Institute in Mexico City chose the first batch of promising left-wing Mexican students for a four-year scholarship

at Moscow's Patrice Lumumba Institute. The central figure selecting these first 10 students was the second secretary of the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City (one of the five Soviet "diplomats" now expelled by the Mexican government).

After the four-year university course, during which they underwent indoctrination in Communist Party and revolutionary tactics, the 10 students asked for field training in antigovernment subversion. They formed themselves into the Revolutionary Action Movement.

BUT MOSCOW would not provide this revolutionary training in the Soviet Union itself. If discovered, the Mexican government would instantly retaliate.

To keep Soviet hands clean, the students were

sent by rail to East Germany, where they acquired North Korean passports. They returned to Moscow and then flew, via Soviet Aeroflot Airline, to Pyongyang, capital of North Korea.

In Korea, they were given six months' training in guerrilla tactics, at a location far from the prying eyes of diplomats. Their training completed, they threw away their passports, flew back to Moscow and returned to Mexico on their Mexican passports. It is unthinkable that all this could have been accomplished without Soviet complicity.

Two more groups, totaling 19 Mexican students, followed the precise course of the first 10. Back in Mexico, they set up eight clandestine training centers, most and started recruiting Mexican counterintelligence

agents uncovered the plot and arrested approximately one-third of the revolutionary students 10 days ago.

The official reaction of the Mexican government, probably the most sophisticated in Latin America, was highly unusual public indignation. Five Soviet diplomats were declared persona non grata and sent home. Beyond that, the affair raises serious questions about Soviet standing throughout the hemisphere — as in Venezuela.

Venezuela has been a key Soviet target for subversion, financed partly through Soviet aid to Communist Cuba, partly through Eastern European Soviet satellites. Attempting to warm relations with Caracas by exchanging diplomatic delegations, Moscow finally reached agreement December after tortuous negotiations con-

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due to the long time it took to get the new embassy up and running, most 20 years.

THAT AGREEMENT limits Soviet personnel in the new embassy to 15, including cooks and chauffeurs. So far, only three Soviet diplomats have actually taken up residence. With the explosive Soviet subversion against Mexico now surfaced, Venezuela will undoubtedly clamp additional restrictions on the new Russian embassy.

In Costa Rica, a 30-year ban on Soviet diplomatic activity was lifted several months ago, but no Russians have yet arrived. Against the Mexican backdrop, Costa Rica—a traditional

democratic bastion in Central America—may have second thoughts (despite January ratification of a surplus coffee-purchase agreement with Moscow).

Likewise, the Russians have been making strenuous efforts to sign a cultural agreement with Colombia, which renewed diplomatic relations with the Soviets in 1968. The agreement was signed last summer but it has not yet been ratified by the Colombian parliament.

All these careful diplomatic probes by Moscow are now endangered by Moscow's patronage of the aborted Mexican affair. Just how much they are endangered is evident in the for-

mal Soviet response to Mexico's expulsion of the five Soviet diplomats. Unable to deny the facts, the Russians blamed the embarrassing affair on "powers"—that is foreign countries—"that are opposed to Soviet-Mexican relations."

What powers? What motivation? The Russians can't answer that question.

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THE EVENING STAR  
Washington, D. C., Friday, March 19, 1971

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# Five Top Soviet Diplomats Are Expelled From Mexico

By JEREMIAH O'LEARY  
Star Staff Writer

The Soviet charge d'affaires to Mexico and four senior members of the embassy staff have been declared persona non grata after Mexican officials said they uncovered a plot by 19 Mexican guerrillas, who had been trained in Moscow and North Korea, to overthrow the government.

The order did not refer to the announcement earlier this week that a plot to install a Marxist-Leninist regime had been smashed, but diplomatic sources said there is no question that the two events are connected.

Foreign Minister Emilio A. Rabasa announced that the five Soviet diplomats are "no longer acceptable" to the Mexican government. They were ordered to leave "in the shortest possible time. Ambassador Igor Kolsowskia, has been reported on sick leave in Moscow for the past month.

The government's decision was regarded in some circles as the most serious act that could have been taken short of an actual break in diplomatic relations.

A Mexico City governmental source said the

that the Russians, at the very least, knew that the 19 arrested students had gone to North Korea for guerrilla training. The 19 had been sent to Moscow on Soviet scholarships to attend Patrice Lumumba University and then reportedly had gone on to Pyongyang for training in terrorism and subversion.

Other diplomatic sources said it has long been believed in Western Hemisphere capitals that the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City is the center for espionage and subversive activities in the United States and the northern part of Latin America. Attachés at the embassy invariably speak English as well as Spanish and at least 12 persons on the 24-man staff are considered to be members of the KGB, Russian security and espionage agency.

President Luis Echeverria, speaking to members of the Mexican Senate, did not mention the Soviet Union specifically but he said, "Mexico is now being attacked when it has stated that it wants a respectful and peaceful reciprocal coexistence."

The five diplomats ordered to be expelled are:

Dmitri Diakonov, 53, chargé

the embassy in the absence of the ambassador, has been working in Latin America since 1947 and is described by a defector as a high-ranking member of the Communist party. He was declared persona non grata by Argentina on April 6, 1959, on an accusation of fomenting industrial riots. While stationed in Brazil in 1963, the newspaper

O Jornal wrote that he was implicated in the "Sergeant's Revolt" that led to the army coup d'état a year later.

Boris P. Kolomyakov, 43, first secretary, has had previous tours in Mexico and Argentina. He has been described by defectors as a high ranking KGB officer.

Boris N. Voskoboinikov, 35, the cultural attache, is in charge of the Mexican-Soviet Cultural Center, and is the officer in charge of handing out scholarships for Mexicans to study at Patrice Lumumba University.

He is described by defectors as being the embassy contact with Mexican students and Communist party members. He studied in Chile for six months in 1965.

Oleg Nechiporenko, 39, a sec-

ond tour in Mexico, having served there in 1961-65. He returned in 1965. A defector has described him as being the embassy security chief.

Alexander Bolshakov, 36, a commercial officer in the embassy, was on his first tour of duty in Mexico, but was identified by a defector to Mexican police as a KGB officer.

The Mexicans recalled their ambassador from Moscow Wednesday after the arrest of the Mexican Marxists.

~~TOP BACKGROUND USE ONLY~~

April 1971

DATES WORTH NOTING

- |             |            |   |
|-------------|------------|---|
| April 13    | Japan      | 20th anniversary of Soviet-Japanese non-aggression pact signed during World War II and broken by Soviet Union one week before the end of war, 8 August 1945, when Japan was on the verge of surrender. It was during the last week of war that the Soviets captured the Kurile Islands.   |
| April 17    | Yugoslavia | Approximate target date for completion and promulgation of constitutional amendments designed to reform federal-local governmental structure and to provide for an orderly (non-coup) method of transferring executive power. If Yugoslavia devises reasonable formulae for dealing with these basic problems, it could add to debate in the Soviet Bloc on these issues: e.g., among the 1968 reforms in Czechoslovakia under Dubcek was an increase in local political responsibility, which is now being undone by the present regime; among the effects of the recent Polish workers' strikes was public acknowledgement by Gierek that Poland needs an orderly system of rotating leaders in and out of power. |
| April 17-19 | Cuba       | 10th anniversary of the Bay of Pigs on 19 April, a Cuban national holiday, could be the occasion for anti-American demonstrations in Cuba and elsewhere in Latin America.   |
| April 21-26 | Salzburg   | Congress of European National Youth Committees. Representatives from Bloc youth groups and the Communist  |

international youth fronts are expected to attend as observers. The Congress may discuss, inter alia, European Security and the possibility of the European National Youth Committees undertaking joint Programs with Bloc youth groups.

April 22	Sofia	10th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party, billed by Party leader Todor Zhivkov as one of the most important events in the Party's history. The agenda includes a new constitution for Bulgaria and the new Party Program. Zhivkov has announced that the Party Program (the first to be presented to a BCP Congress) will provide for "completing the construction of a developed socialist society and for creating the material and spiritual prerequisites for a gradual transition to communism." However, the BCP's blueprint for the future of Bulgaria may be overshadowed at the 10th Congress by a rush to be first to conform to the line and style of the CPSU Congress which just precedes the Bulgarian Congress. The BCP Congress was to be held last fall, but after the CPSU Congress was postponed to this spring the Bulgarians followed suit. (Czechoslovakia is to hold its Party Congress 25 May, and East Germany on 14 June.)
April 30	Cambodia	First anniversary of the entering of U.S. forces into Cambodia (the forces were withdrawn two months later, on 30 June.) Because of the Cambodian anniversary, plus May Day, the first week in May could be the occasion for anti-U.S. demonstrations. (Some of the traditional Easter Week marches could take place in early May instead.)

May 1	Cuba	10th anniversary of Castro's announcement at televised May Day rally in Havana, 1961, that Cuba is a socialist nation and will hold no more elections.
May 7-12	Piran, Yugoslavia	PEN (international writers' organization) will hold an open Round Table on 'Why Do We Write?' hosted by the Yugoslav PEN Center. (PEN will also hold an Executive Committee meeting preparatory to its 38th international congress to be held 12-18 September in Dublin.)
May 10	Vietnam	3rd anniversary of the start of the Paris Peace Talks on Vietnam, in 1968.
May 13-16	Budapest	World Peace Assembly sponsored by the World Peace Council. Participants will be members of the WPC and the Soviet Bloc's other international Communist fronts. The Assembly may emphasize European Security and issue calls for united action by all peace groups.
May 25-27	Helsinki	25th Congress of the Socialist Internationale, which draws participants from Socialist and Social Democratic Parties.
June 1	USSR	New corrective labor codes go into effect. The new legislation, covering regulation of Soviet forced labor camps, provides a harsher prison routine for "dangerous" criminals and expands the types of offenders who fall into this category.